

THE BISHOP'S CHARGE PRESENTED TO THE SECOND SESSION OF THE SEVENTH SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF NSUKKA ON FRIDAY 4TH OCTOBER 2013, AT ST. LUKE'S CHURCH, NSUKKA, NSUKKA CENTRAL ARCHDEACONRY, IN NSUKKA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, ENUGU STATE.

PROTOCOL

*Your Grace,
My Lord Bishops,
The President of Women Ministry, Diocese of Nsukka, Mrs. Ifeoma Agbo,
The Honourable Minister of Power, Ven. Prof. Chinedu Nebo,
The Hon. Chancellor of Nsukka Diocese, Hon. Justice F.I.N. Ngwu,
The Registrar & Other Members of the Legal Team in the Diocese,
The Executive Chairmen of the Local Governments,
The Venerable Archdeacons & other Members of the Clergy,
Your Royal Highnesses,
The Gallant Knights & Ladies of St. Paul,
The Bishop's Nominees,
The distinguished Synod Delegates,
All invited Guests,
Gentlemen of the Press,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Dear People of God,

We welcome you to this Second Session of our Seventh Synod taking place here at St. Luke's Church, Nsukka.

PRAISE

With great joy in my heart, I praise the Almighty God, our strength, guild, sustainer, and comforter; who is the reality of wisdom, love, and justice, the very source of all supply, and our ultimate partner; in the words of the Psalmist:

*O LORD, our Lord,
How excellent is Your name in all the earth,
Who have set Your glory above the heavens!
Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants
You have ordained strength,
Because of Your enemies,
That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.
When I consider Your heavens, the work of your fingers,
The moon and the stars, which You have ordained,
What is man that You are mindful of him,
And the son of man that You visit him?
For You have made him a little lower than the angels,
And You have crowned him with glory and honor,
You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands;
You have put all things under his feet,
All sheep and oxen-*

*Even the beast of the field,
The birds of the air,
And the fish of the sea
That pass through the paths of the seas.
O LORD, our Lord,
How excellent is Your name in all the earth! (Ps.8:1-9. NKJV)*

APPRECIATION

We sincerely appreciate the good people of Nsukka Diocese for their selfless support and commitment whenever we are faced with challenges. I must have to confess that you are the right people to work with. I am very proud of you, and pray that our good Lord will continue to beautify you.

I do appreciate my humble and most beautiful woman in the world, Mrs. Ifeoma Agbo (Mama Nsukka). You can agree with me that God did not make any mistake by equipping me with such a virtuous woman. She is not only a wife but also a mother, equally-yoked-partner in the vineyard of God, and a comforter in times of need. God will continue to preserve you for me.

Our father in the Lord, the Pioneer Bishop of this Diocese, Rt. Rev. Dr. J. C. Ilonuba (JP) and Mrs. R. U. Ilonuba (Nnediugwu), you are a consolation to us. The love you show to us is beyond human explanation. We appreciate your phone calls, prayers, counsel and companionship. The Most High God will keep and preserve you for us.

This year has been very hectic for the Legal Team more than ever before. I understand that growth goes along with challenges. We acknowledge their comportsment and unvoiced operations. The Lord will repay you accordingly.

The House of Clergy, Pastors and Wives, my co-labourers in the vineyard, you are the reason of our progress and joy. Your determination to succeed, ability to handle challenges and sacrificial living has given us break-through in the land. Your silent inputs and hard work will be voiced out on the last day. I love you and enjoy you to keep it up.

We also acknowledge the gallant Knights and Ladies of St. Paul. Your indefatigable support to the Diocese is being noised across the borders of this Diocese. We thank you and appreciate you.

We will not fail to recognize your labour of love, my Nominees who have challenged themselves to be around me in this great event of the Diocese. Our Diocesan Engineers, Diocesan Officials, Board members and their Chairmen etc; May the Almighty God release His immeasurable blessings upon you.

We have been able to function effectively by the grace of God because of the noiseless services of my personal staff. My Administrative Assistant- Rev Daniel Onah, my Chaplains- Rev. Kenneth Onah and Rev. Daniel Abbah, my Clerk- Miss Ogechukwu Ogbodo, my driver (the Pilot) Bro. Francis Nnaji - you all are wonderful. I appreciate your patience and tenacity in coping with my pace. May God remember your partnership and reward you.

We cannot end without recognizing the lofty activities of the Christian Fathers' Fellowship, the Women Ministry, the Youth Fellowship, ACM and indeed, all the organizations in the Diocese. It is your contributions that brought about our progress. May the good Lord bless you.

You can agree with me that our synod is taking a mega shape. We appreciate the hard work of the Planning Committee led by Sir Dr. A. E. Onwurah, and the members of the Local Organizing Committee.

We heartily congratulate the host Archdeacon and his wife, Ven. & Mrs. Theophilus Ugwuishiwu, and all the members of the Archdeaconry who have sacrificed their comfort for the sake of our delegates. Your labour will not be in vain.

We may not be able to recognize all the silent inputs of everybody, but our God who sees in secret will reward you openly in Jesus name, Amen.

RESOURCE PERSONS

SYNOD PREACHER: Venerable Emma Nuel N. Uzuegbunam

Ven. Emma Uzuegbunam was ordained deacon in June 1995 by His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Gideon Otubelu (late) the Bishop of Enugu, who also priested him in June 1996. He is currently the Archdeacon, Nneato Archdeaconry of the Diocese of Isuikwuato-Umunneochi. He holds a Diploma in theology of St. Paul's University College, Awka; BA (Hons, First Class) of University of Nigeria, Nsukka; MA (New Testament); MA (Old Testament). He is currently a PhD Student in Religion (Old Testament) at Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. He is a Chemical Engineer and Chief Technologist at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. He is a widely-travelled preacher and conference speaker, and an author of many books. He is married to Ifeoma, an Accountant and the marriage is blessed with children, to the glory of God.

We appreciate him for accepting to spend such a precious time with us nourishing us with the word of life. Brother, may God continue to enrich you and always grant you an open Heaven in your ministry and life.

BIBLE STUDY LEADER: Prof. Aloysius E. Uzoagulu

Professor Aloysius Emengini Uzoagulu is a Christian brother, a friend, teacher and preacher of the word, and one of those we looked up to, when we were at St. Barth's Asata Enugu. Bro. Aloy thank so much for accepting to take our Bible study despite your crowded engagements. He hails from Uwani Omagu Eke in Udi Local Government Area of Enugu State. He is a husband of one wife, Mrs. Promise Nneze Uzoagulu, and they are blessed with five children.

Professor Uzoagulu started his academic career ladder through the City and Guilds of London Institute. He obtained the Intermediate Certificate in Mechanical/Production Craft in 1973; the Final City and Guilds in Mechanical/Production Engineering in 1975; the Part I Mechanical Engineering Technicians Certificate in 1976; the Part 2 Mechanical Engineering Technicians Certificate in 1978; the Mechanical/Production Technicians Certificate Part 3 in 1981; and the Full Technological Certificate in Mechanical/Production Engineering in 1981.

Thereafter, Prof. Uzoagulu proceeded to the University of Nigeria, Nsukka where he obtained a B Sc. Honours degree in Industrial-Technical and Vocational Education, (Mechanical Technology Option) in 1985; an M Ed. degree in Education in 1989; a PhD in Industrial -Technical and Vocational Education in 1995 and Post-Graduate Diploma in Business Administration in 2001.

Professor Uzoagulu served his University, Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT), Enugu in various capacities. For six years, he was the Head of Department of Technology and Vocational Education. He was the Director, Mature Students Programme (MSP), for four years and a member of various Senate Committees of the University including Committee on Examination Irregularities and Ceremonials. He was also the Head of Department of Technology and Vocational Education, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki between 2005 and 2006 during his sabbatical leave and led the department successfully in the accreditation exercise. He was between 2006 and 2007, the Head and Director, Research Development and Administration at Concept College, Stockwell, South-West London in United Kingdom.

At faculty and departmental levels, he served the University meritoriously, and won the Distinguished Merit Award as the most distinguished Academic Staff in the Faculty of Education in 1998/99 academic session. In recognition of his contributions, he was commended in 1996 by the ESUT University Governing Council for discipline, dedication to duty, and patriotism in the discharge of official duties.

Professor Uzoagulu is a member of several professional bodies. He has published several research papers in peer reviewed journals; written books, co-authored and contributed chapters in several other books. He has also presented many lead papers and keynote addresses in many conferences, seminars and workshops. Professor Uzoagulu had been the Editor-in-Chief of highly rated journals including recently, the Nigerian Vocational Association Journal, NVAJ.

Professor Uzoagulu in his technical creative output, produced three pro-type machines namely: (i) Hammer – Mill Machine, an agro-based crusher machine with a production capacity of 3 tons per hour in 1981. (ii) A Tumbling Machine in 1991; and (iii) The Liquid Mixer in 1997.

He served as External Examiner to many Institutions including University of Nigeria, Nsukka; Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki and College of Education (Technical) Arochukwu, Abia State. He is currently an adjunct Professor in the Department of Technology and Vocational Education, Ebonyi State University Abakaliki.

Professor Uzoagulu has worked also in churches and Fellowships. He served as the Bible

Study Coordinator for more than eight years at St. Bartholomew's Anglican Church Asata Enugu. He was also President of Scripture Union Fellowship New Haven Enugu; Missionary Coordinator for twelve years at Area and Regional levels of the Scripture Union Nigeria. He was for six years, the Education Board Chairman, King's Kids Nursery and Primary School of the Scripture Union Enugu Area. Currently Professor Uzoagulu is the Chairman of the Regional Education Board of all the Schools in the Scripture Union Enugu Region.

Professor Uzoagulu has demonstrated a high level of diligence and dedication to duty as an academic leader and administrator. His training and experience no doubt prepared him for the task expected of an executive manager. These qualities among others therefore, have earned him his present position as the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Enugu State University of Science and Technology, ESUT, Enugu.

THE GUEST PREACHER: *The Ven. Prof. Chinedu Ositadinma Nebo*

Professor Chinedu Ositadinma Nebo was born on 3rd June, 1952 in Kafanchan to Mr. Christopher and Mrs. Ifeyinwa Nebo, natives of Udi in Enugu State. Due to the nature of his father's work in the Nigeria Railway Corporation, young Chinedu had his primary school education in Ibadan, Kafanchan and Port Harcourt where he passed his First School Leaving Certificate Examination with Distinction in 1965. He then attended the prestigious Government Secondary School, Afikpo with scholarship, completing his secondary school career in flying colours. He started higher school program, again on scholarship, at Government College Umuahia, but later abandoned the program to proceed to the United States of America with Federal Government Scholarship to pursue a degree course in Mining Engineering at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. Chinedu's father had asked him to name the girl he would marry before leaving the shores of Nigeria. Chinedu named his secondary school sweetheart Ifeyinwa Agbo and his father took him to her parents to introduce the young suitor. The marriage was consummated about 35 years ago. They have remained happily married ever since and the marriage is blessed with four children and some grand children.

Chinedu graduated with Highest Honors (First Class Honors) in May 1978. He proceeded to graduate school and obtained an M. Sc. Degree in Metallurgical Engineering, and later a Ph.D. in Materials Engineering Science. Between his Masters and Ph.D. programmes he worked at Duval Corporation, Tucson, Arizona for nearly two years to obtain practical experience in the minerals industry.

On returning to Nigeria, Chinedu was encouraged by the famous University administrator, late Professor Kenneth Dike, to join Anambra State University of Technology (ASUTECH) which later became Enugu State University of Science and Technology. Professor Nebo occupied various academic and administrative positions. He was the Director of the Pre-Science Program in 1991 to December 1999, he served as the Associate Dean, Faculty of Engineering from January 2000 to January 2004, he also served as the sole Deputy Vice Chancellor before being appointed the Vice Chancellor, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

In June, 2004 he was appointed the Vice Chancellor of University of Nigeria, Nsukka after one of the most hotly contested races for the post of VC in the history of Nigeria. As Vice Chancellor of the University of Nigeria Nsukka, Professor Nebo rejuvenated the ailing and

grossly neglected University and revived the wounded Lion. When he became VC the University was littered with abandoned projects, most of which were abandoned over twenty years before he assumed office. These projects were completed in addition to many new projects that were started and completed under his administration.

After the completion of his tenure as the Vice Chancellor of the University of Nigeria in 2009, he was immediately sent to Federal University, Oye Ekiti by the Federal Government to continue the miracle as the Vice Chancellor of the new University. Early this year, Prof. Nebo was appointed by the President of this nation, President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan as the Minister of Power.

Above all Ven. Prof. Chinedu Nebo is a Born-Again Christian, a minister of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and an ordained Anglican Clergyman - an Archdeacon. Professor Nebo has traversed the length and breadth of Nigeria with the message of the Gospel. We are happy that by his humble disposition and love for God, he accepted to preach our Synod sermon despite his tight engagement.

THE HOST ARCHDEACONRY

We are grateful to the entire people of Nsukka Central Archdeaconry for accepting the challenge of hosting this Synod. There is no doubt they really labored and prepared for a successful Synod as we can see the fruits since we arrived yesterday. Ven. Theophilus and Mrs. Helen Ugwuishiwu, Ven. Chijioke and Hon. Dr. Mrs. Kay Onyechi, Rev. Can. Samuel and Mrs. Christy Ezugwu, Rev. Timothy and Mrs. Promise Ugwu, Rev. Amarachukwu and Mrs. Blessing Onuigbo, Rev. Christopher and Mrs. Nkechi Okwor, Rev. Dr. Samuel and Mrs. Philomina Chukwumeka and Rev. Prof. Nkemakonam Nwolisa and Prof. Mrs. Patience Osadebe, and all Lay pastors and their lovely wives, the chairman of the Local Organising Committee - Engr. Godson C. Onugwu and all those that laboured for the successful hosting of this Synod, we appreciate you. We pray that God will remember your labour of love and reward you.

Nsukka Central Archdeaconry that is hosting this Synod was inaugurated on 17th April, 2010 by His Lordship Rt. Rev. A. E. Agbo. Venerable Steve Dimelu was installed as the first Archdeacon. He was replaced by Ven. T.O. Ugwuishiwu in 2011. This Archdeaconry is made up of four Parishes. Namely:

1. St. Luke's Parish, Nsukka
2. St. Andrew's Parish, Orba Road Nsukka
3. St. John's Parish, Lejja
4. Emmanuel Church, Ede-Enu

Please permit me to give an abridged version of the history of these Parishes and the churches in them because of space and time, except St. Luke's Church Nsukka the venue of the Synod.

ST. LUKE'S PARISH, NSUKKA

St. Luke's Parish, Nsukka was inaugurated in 2004. It is made up of the following churches:

1. St. Luke's Church, Nsukka, planted in the year, 1942. The present workers are Ven. Theophilus Ugwuishiwu, Rev. Dr. Samuel Chukwuemeka, Rev. Amarachukwu Onuigbo and Pastor Ignatius Ugwoke.
2. St. Philip's Anglican Church, Echara, planted on August, 2007. The present church workers are Rev. Prof. N. N. Osadebe and Pastor Kenneth Ugbabe.
3. Christ Church, Nguru, planted in the year, 1995 with Pastor Samuel Abonyi as the present worker.

ST. ANDREW'S PARISH, ORBA ROAD

St. Andrew's Parish, Orba Road is inaugurated as a Parish in August 2009, with Rev. Can. S. O. Ezugwu as the first Parish Priest. The following churches constitute the Parish:

1. *St. Andrew's Church, Orba Road*, planted on 20th March, 1994. The present church workers are Ven. Chijioke A. Onyechi and Pastor Edwin Ngwu.
2. *Emmanuel Church, Edem Nru*: This church was planted on 8th June, 2008. Rev. Can. S. O. Ezugwu is the present Priest with Pastor Emmanuel Obinna Agbaji as the Pastor.
3. *New Bethel Church, Odenigwe* was planted on 30th March, 2008. Pastor Gideon Attah is the present worker.
4. *St. Peter's Church, Ezema Nru*, planted in the year 2005. Pastor Samuel Ezeorah is the present church worker.

EMMANUEL PARISH, EDE-OBALLA

Emmanuel Parish, Ede-Oballa was among the newly created parishes. The Parish was inaugurated on Sunday 17th March, 2013. The present Parish Priest is Rev. Timothy Ugwu. The following Churches constitute the Parish:

1. *Emmanuel Church, Ede-Enu, Ede-Oballa*: This church was planted on 15th May, 2005. The present church worker is Rev. Timothy Ugwu.
2. *All Saints' Church, Amegbu Ede-Oballa*, planted in the year 1999, with Pastor Theophilus Chukwuemeka Eze as the present church worker.
3. *Good Shepherd Church, Isiamaelu* was planted in April, 2012. The present Church worker is Pastor Somtochukwu Nweke.
4. *Our Saviour's Anglican Church, Umukabi, Ede-Oballa* was planted on 10th February, 2012. Pastor Jonas Chikwado Agbeze is the church worker serving there.

ST. JOHN'S PARISH, LEJJA

This Parish was inaugurated on Sunday 21st November, 2010 with Rev. Eric Ude as the first Parish Priest. The Vicar is Rev. Christopher Okwor. Churches that constitute St. John's Parish, Lejja are:

1. *St. John's Anglican Church, Lejja*: The church was planted in April, 1933 through evangelistic efforts of Rev. A. N. Asiekwu. The present vicar is Rev. C. O. Okwor.
2. *Christ Church, Ugbelenabo*: This church was planted at Ugbelenabo after the crusade organized by the St. John's E.F.A.C group in 1993. The present church worker is Pastor Ifeanyi Okoro.

THE HISTORY OF THE HOST CHURCH: ST. LUKE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, NSUKKA

St. Luke's Anglican Church, Nsukka started as an arm of St. Paul's School, Nsukka in Isiakpu village, Nsukka in the year 1942 through the efforts of Mr. M. Mbah, late Abraham Attah, late Rev. G. P. Bernard and some other elders of Isiakpu Nsukka. At that time, the church operated as both school and church until 1959.

The name St. Luke's was given to the church by Mr. Vincent Ugwu (late), a one-time school headmaster and acting church teacher in 1957 during the baptism of about 100 members by Rev. H. Ezirim – the then Priest in charge of Nsukka Anglican District. In 1959, Mr. Daniel Ezechi was posted to the church as the first resident church teacher and school teacher. From that period onwards, church teachers have been posted to the church until 1995.

In 1995 Reverend B. C. Okwor was posted to this church as the first resident priest. In 1996, the second Priest in the person of late Rev. A. A. Ugwu came and replaced Rev. Okwor. Rev. Ugwu then had a Deacon who worked with him in the person of Rev. S. O. Ezugwu. In January 1998, Rev. Engr. Dr. T. C. Madueme was posted as the third Priest to St. Luke's Anglican Church, Nsukka to replace Rev. A. A. Ugwu. Rev. Dr. T. C. Madueme had a church teacher – Brother Samson Eneh who was attached to him. Rev. Madueme rose to the rank of a Canon and Venerable at St. Luke's and served meritoriously until year 2006 when Rev. Canon S. N. Dimelu replaced him. It is on record that Arch. Chijioke Eze drew the plan of this church free-of-charge and his father late Ven. S. A. Eze had prophesied in the 80s that this church will one day be an Archdeaconry headquarter. It is so today. Being the only indigenous Anglican Church in Nsukka town then, it had an Association in the 70's/80's known as NTACA (Nsukka Town Anglican Christian Association) whose Chairman was Venerable S. A. Ezeh. This association united all members of the Anglican Communion from Nsukka town and had its headquarters at St. Luke's Nsukka, hence it answers "**St. Luke's Nsukka.**"

During the war the school/church building was damaged. Sir A. C. Ezema and other members re-constructed the building with the help of UNICEF.

The strength of the church in the late 70s was about 120 and rose to about 150 in the late 80s. As at 1999, the strength had risen to about 350 members. The church started then to build a permanent house of prayer to accommodate its increasing number of worshippers.

It is important to note that in November 1984, the Anglican Bishop of Enugu Diocese, Rt. Rev. G. N. Otubelu paid his first official visit to the church. In 1994, Rt. Rev. Dr. J. C. Ilonuba – the then Bishop of Nsukka Diocese laid the foundation stone of a new Church building of St. Luke’s Anglican Church, Nsukka.

During that time also, the church organized a fund raising ceremony for the new Church building, where about N1.2million was realized- an incredible amount then. Through the patriotism of some members of this church, Sir Engr. Dozie Eze, Sir A. C. Ezema, Chief Josiah Omeje and Chief Emmanuel Mgba Okolo, the church got a large quantity of red sand. Through manual labour, members of this church with wheel-barrows, buckets, pans and baskets, carried the sand and filled the foundation.

In addition to the spiritual growth that God brought at different times on the Church, there were remarkable infrastructural development recorded in the course of the ministry of some of the priests that served here. For instance in the 8 years of ministry of Ven. Prof T C Madueme, he completed the Church building that he met at foundation stage, except the ceiling and few other things. Ven. Steve Dimelu completed the Church building, started a storeyed Vicarage and brought it to decking level. Ven. T. O. Ugwuishiwu started a Secondary school and is roofing the vicarage.

History has it that Sir A. C. Ezema, Chief Josiah Omeje and Chief Emmanuel Mgba Okolo are among the foundation members who with other members like Sir Frank and Lady Joy Obayi, Sir Samuel Okolo, Sir Onyebuchi Okolo in partnership with the clergymen that served at various times continually and tirelessly fought, labored and moved St. Luke’s Church to her present enviable heights.

Church Planting

The following churches were planted by St. Luke’s Church:

1. St. Andrew’s Church, Orba Road
2. Christ Church, Nguru
3. All Saints Church, Ede-Oballa
4. St. Peter’s Church, Ezema Nru
5. St. Philip’s Church, Echara
6. Emmanuel Church, Ede-Oballa
7. Emmanuel Church Edem-Nru
8. H.T.C. Uwani-Ugwu
9. Good Shepherd Church, Isamelu
10. Our Saviour Church, Umukabi

School Teachers/Church Teachers

1. Mr. Daniel Ezechi
2. Mr. Vincent Ugwu

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| 3. Sir A. C. Ezema | } | <i>These 2 later became People's</i> |
| 4. Chief J. A. Omeje | | |
| 5. Sir E. C. Onah | | <i>respectively for many years.</i> |
| 6. Ven. G. Ajibo | | |

Church Catechists/Lay Pastors

1. Bro. Frank Ilo - Catechist (*now priest.*)
2. Bro. Theo. Omeje - Catechist
3. Bro. Samuel Ugwoke - Catechist
4. Bro. Simon Ossai - Catechist
5. Bro. Emma Anyanwu - Catechist
6. Bro. Samson Ene - Catechist (*now priest*)
7. Bro. Edwin Agbo - Catechist (*now priest*)
8. Bro. Praise Ochie - Lay Pastor
9. Bro. Samuel Ajibo - Lay Pastor
10. Bro. Ignatius Ugwoke - Lay Pastor

Priests That Served in St Luke's Nsukka

1. Rev. B. C. Okwor - 1995 - 1996
2. Rev. A. A. Ugwu - 1996 - 1998
3. Rev. S. O. Ezugwu - 1997 - 1997
4. Ven. Prof. T. C. Madueme - 1998 - 2007
5. Rev. T. N. Onah - 2003 - 2004
6. Rev. Ugochukwu Ijeudo - 2004 - 2007
7. Ven. Steve Dimelu - 2006 - 2011
8. Rev. Matthew Ezema - 2008 - 2012
9. Ven. T. O. Ugwuishiwu - 2011 - date
10. Rev. Dr. Samuel Chukwuemeka - 2011 - date
11. Rev. Amarachukwu Onuigbo - 2012 - date

EVENTS IN THE DIOCESE

Consecration of Bishop Manasses Chijiokem Okere

A decision of Church of Nigeria Anglican Communion to consecrate the Bishop Elect of Isuikwuato/Umunochi, Ven. Manasses C. Okere on Sunday 18th November 2012 was communicated to us by the Primate - Most Rev. N. D. Okoh few days before our Synod last year.

As soon as we received this message of hosting, we immediately constituted a Consecration Planning Committee under the chairmanship of Hon. Justice F. I. N. Ngwu (KSP), the Chancellor of the Diocese. This Committee worked assiduously round the clock to achieve a success which was acclaimed by every participant including the Primate himself. It was very tasking and demanding, especially in the area of finance. But in everything, God granted us the grace needed.

The entire people of Nsukka Diocese, Clergy and Laity demonstrated their unalloyed support and co-operation. Without your love and willing donations, it would not have been possible. We thank you and appreciate you. We also appreciate other Dioceses in the Province that rallied around us. May God bless you.

We appreciate in a special way, Dame Prof. Uche Azikiwe, the wife of the first President of Nigeria and Owelle of Onitsha, late Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, who hosted the entire Bishops and their wives in a sumptuous dinner. May God reward you beyond this generation.

I must appreciate the gallant effort of the Chairman of the Hosting Committee, Hon. Justice F. I. N. Ngwu and all the chairmen of the subcommittees, and Organizations in the Diocese and in fact everyone that contributed in one way or the other to the success of the event. May the good Lord reward you abundantly! Your labour in the Lord will not be in vain.

2013 Prayer and Fasting

January in Nsukka Diocese has become synonymous with Prayer and Fasting. This is because the whole Diocese has heartily embraced the month for her annual prayer and fasting. Due to testimonies accompanying this event, every Anglican Faithful looks forward to the month with great expectations.

The 2013 January Prayer and Fasting did not go below the set standard. Every arm participated fully. Christian Fathers' Fellowship had her Prayer Convocation on Saturday 19th while the Women had theirs on 18th and 19th at Cathedral and Potter's House respectively.

Diocesan Night Vigil and Anointing service took place on Friday 25th. People turned out en masse in each of the meetings.

2014 Prayer and Fasting will take another shape. Though the programme of the events is not yet out, we have in plans of holding a teaching session that will run for some days. If there is anything we need most now, it is grounding ourselves with the word of God. I believe in my spirit that God will do a wonderful thing in that meeting. May the Lord bless you as you take part in next year's Prayer and Fasting.

Trip to UK

I thank God for the opportunity He gave my wife and I to travel to the United Kingdom in April this year for the New Word Alive Conference held in Wales. I thank Most Rev. Ben. Kwashi through whom we were invited to the conference. The trip was full of wonderful experiences, exposure and spiritual upliftments. I sincerely appreciate Rev. Can. Hugh Palma and his lovely wife Clare Palma our host and the Rector of All Souls Church Langham Palace Central London, who is also the Chairman of the Organizing Committee of the conference. They lavished their love on us and did everything within their limit to encourage, support and build us in our ministry. Rev. Can. Hugh, may God reward you and your wonderful team at All Souls for your love and devotion to the Truth.

We also appreciate Baroness Cox – a woman of valour, the friends we met at St. Luke’s Western London, Crosslinks Mission Agency Headquarters and Cornhill College. May God reward you for your living faith.

Inauguration of Archdeaonries and Parishes

You would recall that during our last year’s Synod, four Archdeaonries and thirty two Parishes were created. Their inauguration took place as follows:

Archdeaonries

S/N	DATE	ARCHDEACONRY
1	Sun. 5/5/2013	Unadu Archdeaonry
2	Sun. 12/5/2013	Eha-Alumona Archdeaonry
3	Sun. 19/5/2013	Obimo Archdeaonry
4	Sun. 29/6/2013	Ohodo Archdeaonry

Parishes:

S/NO	DATE	PARISH
1	Tue: 12/3/13	Umujioha Parish
2	Tue: 12/3/13	Ujoma „
3	Wed. 13/3/13	Akpa-Edem „
4	Wed. 13/3/13	Edem-Enu „
5	Thur. 14/3/13	Idi-Opi „
6	Thur. 14/3/13	Idoha „
7	Sat. 16/3/13	Ugbaike „
8	Sat. 16/3/13	Olido „
9	Sun. 17/3/13	Ede-Oballa „
10	Sun. 17/3/13	Ajuona Obimo „
11	Tue. 19/3/13	Mgboko „
12	Tue. 19/3/13	Ochima „
13	Wed. 20/3/13	Akwari „
14	Wed. 20/3/13	Umabor „
15	Thur. 21/3/13	Ikpuiga „
16	Thur. 21/3/13	Igogoro „
17	Sat. 23/3/13	Ijekpe „
18	Sun. 24/3/13	Ibagwa-Ani „
19	Sun. 24/3/13	Okutu „
20	Tue. 26/3/13	Ogurugu „
21	Thur. 28/3/13	Nrobo „
22	Thur. 28/3/13	Ugbene Ajima „
23	Thur. 2/4/13	Umuogbo Ekposhi „
24	Thur. 2/4/13	Agu Ibeje „
25	Tue. 7/5/13	Obollo-Eke „

26	Tue. 7/5/13	Obollo-Etiti „
27	Thur. 9/5/13	Uburu Uzoego „
28	Thur. 9/5/13	Ndioke „
29	Tue. 14/5/13	Owerre Obukpa „
30	Tue. 14/5/13	Ajuona Obukpa „
31	Thur. 16/5/13	Agu Ogbara „
32	Thur. 21/5/13	Adaba „

It was during these inaugurations that it became clearer to us why God led us to take that decision. It will truly be an enabling platform for the gospel to take root in those places and for aggressive evangelism. The people welcomed it with great joy and celebrated it as mark of their spiritual liberation.

The clergymen placed in-charge of those areas have since taken up the challenge, and many are already making exploits. Their progress report will be discussed in this Synod by one group to see how far they are going with the vision behind their inaugurations and for sharing ideas for better performance.

However since the announcement of the creation of these Archdeaconries and Parishes, the people of Ozalla have refused to accept becoming one Archdeaconry with Ohodo. They wrote to us as to why they are not compatible. There were allegations of cheatings and mistrusts in their past dealings with each other both at church and community levels.

We made every effort to explain the spirit behind the carving out of these Archdeaconries and more importantly why church must not divide. Delegations were sent and I personally met with some of their people but all our efforts yielded no fruitsfell on deaf ears. They have even come to the point of managing the church fund and taking decisions without their clergy. We now ask the Synod to decide on the way forward.

Trinity Ordination, 2013

The Trinity Ordination of the Diocese took place on 7th July, 2013 at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in a solemn service filled with the presence of God.

Those priested include:

- ↳ Rev. Christian Tochukwu Orji,
- ↳ Rev. Samuel Eze,
- ↳ Rev. Chijioke Amara Ozulu,
- ↳ Rev. Emmanuel Ejike Isiwu,
- ↳ Rev. Favour Ifebuche Eze,
- ↳ Rev. Daniel Okwu Amoke,
- ↳ Rev. Levi Odoabuchi Omeje and
- ↳ Rev. Nnamdi Alexander Ossai.

Those that were made Deacons include:

- ➡ Rev. Christian Onyebuchi Ajibo,

- ➔ Rev. Chukwudi Chukwudike Elejere,
- ➔ Rev. Adolphus Onyebuchi Nwachukwu and
- ➔ Rev. Samuel Sunday Olinya

The Retreatant was the Provost of All Saints' Cathedral, Onitsha, of the Diocese on the Niger, Very Rev. Dr. Emmanuel and Prof. Mrs. Ekpunobi.

Theological Training

Following the creation of new Archdeaconries and Parishes that brought us to having a total of eighteen (18) Archdeaconries and seventy nine (79) Parishes, with the evangelical wave we are experiencing in the Diocese, we now have a very serious need for more Priest in the Diocese.

In pursuance of the vision God has given us, we have selected the following Lay-Pastors who have been recommended to us for their outstanding performance in the ministry for Ordination Training. They have already commenced training at Trinity Theological College, Umuahia under the Sandwich program.

These include:

1. Stephen Ugwu
2. Oliver Ajibo
3. George Michael
4. Christian Agbara
5. Innocent Nnamani
6. Ignatius Ugwoke
7. Isaac Ugwuanyi
8. Sunday K. Akubue
9. Emmanuel Ezugwu

We pray that our good Lord will see them through in the name of Jesus, Amen.

Payment of Staff Salaries

We would recall that the Diocese adopted a New Financial Policy two years ago. Following our assessment of the policy during the 3rd Session of the 6th Synod 2011, it was accepted that the new policy is better than the old one; hence we endorsed the continuation of the new policy. However, following some hitches reported to have been encountered including inability of some smaller churches to pay their workers' salaries, some individuals at the 2012 Synod subscribed to assist in payment of some workers in some of these churches in addition to the 20 churches the Diocese is paying their staff salary. About 13 persons kept to this pledge. A total of one million, fifty four thousand, five hundred and sixty naira (N1,054,560) has been donated by the end of August 2013. The list is as follows:

S/N	DATE	NAMES	AMOUNT PAID
1	21/06/2013	Rt. Rev. A.E Agbo Jan. - Aug.	180,000
2	03/01/2013	Rev. & Mrs. S.N Ogbuele	36,000

3	21/01/2013	C/O Rev. Daniel Onah	20,000
4	04/02/2013	Dame Lydia N. Omeje Ogbu	120,000
5	31/07/2013	Dr. & Prof. Mrs. Oguonu Jan. – Aug. 2013	80,000
6	05/02/2013	Rev. Can. Ekene Eze Jan. – July 2013	35,000
7	07/02/2013	Sir Dr. Augustine Onwurah	253,560
8	07/02/2013	Rev. Dr. Ikem Okoye	110,000
9	13/02/2013	Okechukwu Chinonso	6,000
10	01/03/2013	Mrs. Chinyere Ukwueze	24,000
11	15/03/2013	Sir Prof. Okey A. Umeakuka	60,000
12	19/03/2013	Ikechi Nzemechi	30,000
13	03/04/2013	Ven. Ezeigwe	120,000
		TOTAL	1,074,560

I want to emphasize that it is not that it is very convenient for these brethren who are assisting these churches to pay their workers' salaries. Rather they deprived themselves of their comfort to ensure that the work of God is moving on. I know that their rewards will always be great. May the good Lord continue to elevate them in the name of Jesus, Amen.

We still appeal to those who wish to partner with God in this direction to indicate their willingness as we still have a lot of Missionary Churches that cannot pay their workers' salaries.

Admission and Confirmation

Following the production of Diocesan materials on Confirmation and Follow-up study manuals for various wings, we considered it very necessary to give room for adequate preparations by Parishes before launching out with these events.

Already there is a plan to cover all the Parishes this coming year in our confirmation starting from February 2014. The schedule will be published before the end of the year. All the Parishes are enjoined to make adequate preparation with the materials which are already on sale at the Diocesan Bookshop. Remember, this is a good opportunity the Lord has given us to make disciples. Please, all the Clergy and wives as well as Pastors and wives should take it very seriously. Be involved in the preparation yourself. *“Prepare, pray and participate in the Admissions and Confirmations”* is our slogan. When we do this, I believe, God will bless our labour. We will celebrate the best performance next year.

Dedication

On Sunday, 15th day of September 2013 in a colourful service presided over by us, a two storey Vicarage built by Church of Transfiguration was dedicated and the Sod for a new church building turned.

A New Website for the Diocese

In a bid to allow the world access to the events in the Diocese which our first website could not adequately provide, a new website has been designed and hosted for the Diocese. The web address is www.adons.org. You can now access the Diocese through this web.

RE-CONSTITUTION AND INAUGURATION OF COMMITTEES/BOARDS

Diocesan Education Board

Following the provisional handover of schools to voluntary Agencies in Enugu State by the State Government on 26th Jan. 2012, there became an apparent need to have a formidable Board that will manage our educational system effectively and reposition our schools above others. During this first handover, a total of three (3) Secondary Schools and forty three (43) Primary Schools were granted to the Diocese of Nsukka.

Nsukka has the highest population of these schools among other Dioceses. During the handover, the Government promised to issue us with enabling legal instrument which will define the details of the rules that will govern the management of this school system.

However, the Government failed to meet up with her promise and even refused to gazette the handover. This brought some setbacks on the pace with which we had started. However, we did not just fold our hands; we were doing as much as we could. The removal of the erstwhile Commissioner for Education has brought some hope and green light to our expectations.

On Saturday 6th July, 2013, a new Diocesan Education Board was inaugurated. The Board is made up of fifteen members, chaired by Sir Prof. Patrick Eya, while Sir Barr. Chike Ngwu is the Executive Secretary.

During the inauguration, the Board is charged with the responsibility of pursuing with vigour the educational Vision of the Diocese and the approved Blue Print on Education of the Diocese. We are impressed with what is already happening in our educational sector. We want also to commend the new set of Principals of our schools – Sir Tagbo Ugwu of Anglican Grammar School, Nsukka, Lady MaryRose Ngwu of St. Cyprian's Girls Secondary School, Nsukka, Dr. Mrs. Amaka Ejimchukwu of Special Science School, Nsukka and Mr. Anthony O. Eze of St. Luke's Comprehensive Secondary School, Ekposhi. These schools are already bubbling with life. Keep it up and may the Lord give all the needed grace.

Agricultural Committee

The agricultural sector of the Diocese had some setbacks in 2012. However, the Diocese is not despaired. We have reconstituted a 7-Man-Committee for Agriculture chaired by Dr. Shedrack Asogwa, with Rev. Robinson Agbo as the Secretary. During the inauguration of this Committee on Saturday 6th July, 2013 at the Diocesan Secretariat, it was charged with the following functions:

1. Overseeing all the agricultural investments of the Diocese.

2. Resuscitating the ailing agricultural sector.
3. Ensuring proper management of the Diocesan tractor
4. Presenting account to the Diocesan Board as and when due.
5. Making reference to the Diocesan Way Forward for the Diocesan Vision and Mission as it affects the Agricultural Sector of the Diocese.

Already the Committee has taken off in full swing. She has carefully studied the problems surrounding the Piggery farm and proffered some solutions. Presently, the Piggery farm is doing well. Contrary to mono-cropping which has been in practice, the Committee has decided to explore the multiple cropping options with a hectare of land already planted. This was done with the view to ensuring there was no total loss in the event of failure of one crop. The sector is gradually recuperating.

We thank and appreciate the zeal of our brother, the Chairman of the Committee, Dr. Shedrack Asogwa who is always around visiting the farm daily. May the good Lord always meet your needs.

Faith Foundation Mission Hospital

We continue to thank God for the continuous progress of this Institution since its inception in 2008. Presently the hospital has a total staff strength of 54, including five Residential/special Doctors and seventeen Nurses/CHEWS.

By the grace of God, there has been an increasing patronage of the hospital even by unexpected people due to the quality and experience of our staff and the genuineness and effectiveness of our drugs. The following is the summary of the Hospital's clinical activities from January - August 2013.

S/NO	ACTIVITY	NUMBER
1.	No. of orthopedic patients	485
2.	No. of OPD patients (adult)	1,682
3.	No. of OPD patients (children)	97
4.	No. of admissions - Adult	125
5.	No. of admissions - children	46
6.	No. of deliveries	46
7.	No. of antenatal visits	196
8.	No. of C/S	17
9.	No. of mortality	8
10.	No. of Ophthalmological patients	391
11.	No. of other surgeries	79
12.	No. of HIV patients	92
13.	No. of Gynecological patients	115
14.	No. of physiotherapy cases	6

Projects

The hospital has carried out the following projects within the period under review:

1. Hospital gate and security House.
2. Hospital Canteen.

3. Residential Doctors' Apartment.
4. New 60 bed capacity Hospital Building.

Challenges

It was like the devil saw where God is taking this hospital that had a little beginning but is already making waves in health care services not just in Nsukka but also the State, and gathered all his forces to attack. This attack came in form of a falling tree in the hospital land breaking NEPA poles and cutting the cables, and a raging battle over the positioning of the hospital mortuary. We know all these are distractions, and our God in Heaven who gave us that land and the vision for the hospital will fight our battle, and victory will be ours at last.

We thank the Hospital Administrator for his doggedness and all the Hospital Board members especially the Chairman Sir Dr. C.O.B. Eze who have shown much love to the hospital in particular and work of God in general. Special mention should also be made of Rev. Dr. Samuel Chukwuemeka, the Medical Director- you are a gift to us. May the Almighty God continue to strengthen them.

Bethsaida Institute of Leadership and Missions (BILEM)

The school graduated seven students in June this year. Among them was a Priest from Ihiala Diocese who was awarded Post Graduate Diploma in Intercultural Studies (PGDIS). The students did their field practicum at Ugbo-Ogbunike in conjunction with Adani Parish. This ten-day mission outreach resulted in the planting of a new church in the place.

The school has gotten a new Registrar by name Rev. Christian Orji. He took over from Rev. Joel Ugwoke who has been acting since the inception of the school.

Rev. Orji is a Priest in the Diocese, a graduate of Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, and a product of Nigeria Intercultural College Of Missions (NICOM) Ibadan before proceeding to Trinity Theological College Umuahia for his Ordination Training. Presently he serves at St. Mark's Parish Umuopu.

The staff of the Institute include:

1. Ven. Chinedu Onah - *Rector*
2. Ven. E. I. Asogwa - *Dean of Academics*
3. Rev. Christian Orji - *Registrar*
4. Rev. Can. Kingsley Obetta
5. Rev. Can. Ekene Eze - *Dean, Students' Affairs*
6. Rev. Alphonsus Odo
7. Rev. Chukwukaodinaka Oragu
8. Evang. Odinaka Eze
9. Mrs. Nkechi Ogbuele
10. Ord. Basil Okenyi
11. Ven. Sunday Adepoju (Dean NICOM, Ibadan) - *Visiting Lecturer*
12. Miss Ebere Agbo - *Clerk*

We want to emphasize here that Bethsaida Institute of Leadership and Mission (BILEM) is open to all Christians, both Lay and Ordained. We encourage you to pick the admission form for 2013/14 session which is on sale now.

May the Almighty God continue to bless the Rector and all the Staff for their effort. May He continue to increase your ministry.

Cathedral Project

It all started in January 2009, when a Committee on Cathedral building was inaugurated at the Chapel of Spiritual Renewal, charged with the responsibility of sourcing for the fund and building the Cathedral. The Committee chaired by Dr. Emeka Enejere was given the Cathedral plan with three million (N3m) Naira mobilization fund to commence the project valued at N300m as at 2009. A space of five (5) years was given to the Committee to build a befitting Cathedral that occupies a floor area of 3,680sqm on the ground; with a capacity of about 3,622 worshippers and a height of about 30m above ground level. The edifice consists of three main floor levels – lower level, ground level and gallery floor level. It was a journey of faith as the feasibility of raising this money here in Nsukka was not in view, hence many members of the Project Committee dropped on the way. But we thank God for the Committee Chairman and other faithful members of the Committee who were undaunted. We also appreciate the Bezalel and Aholiab of our time, Arc. Innocent Agbo, Engr. Dr. Ugo Nwoji and Bro. Matthias Oti who offered their services and knowledge to ensure that this edifice is built with minimal waste and maximum output. Only God can reward them.

Presently the concrete structural work on the Cathedral has been completed. The outstanding works include the roofing, finishing which involve the flooring, installation of windows and doors, external works consisting of car parks, drainages, landscaping, service drops etc. Already the flooring has been taken up by the Cathedral Parish and they have secured a lot of materials towards that.

The Roofing of the Cathedral

A team of professionals to oversee the roofing of the edifice was put in place. They were charged with the responsibilities of awarding the contract and supervising the roofing. The team is being guided by the cost estimate from the construction engineers at approximately forty million naira (N40m), spread as follows:

❖ Structure steel roof	—	N 16,519,000
❖ PVC ceiling installation	—	N 9,240,000
❖ Roofing estimate	—	N 10,605,100

The team interviewed four construction contractors who quoted for the structural steel work and the contract was awarded to the best performed contractor, the Solid Engineering Company Limited. The company commenced work immediately in July. It is expected that by the end of November, they might have concluded work on structural steel roofing.

Finance

God has been the main source of our financial supply since the commencement of this project in February 2009 with the only available sum of three million naira (~~N~~3m). Though

the Synod forms the major source of our financial source, a lot has come from friends and well wishers.

A call was made for a willing donation of one million naira (₦1m) from forty people to offset the bill for the roofing project. The following list is the result so far of that prayerful appeal.

S/N	NAME	AMOUNT PAID
1.	Church of Nigeria (Most Rev. N.D. Okoh)	2,000,000
2.	Rt. Rev. Aloysius E. Agbo	1,000,000
3.	Bro. Ejiofor Oke	4,000,000
4.	Sir Engr. Nnaemeka Nwa	1,000,000
5.	Charles Mba	1,000,000
6.	Evang. Sam. Maduka Onyishi C.E.O. Peace Mass Transit Ltd	1,000,000
7.	Senator Ayogu Eze	1,000,000
8.	Mayor Festus Ozioko	1,000,000
9.	Ven. S. A. Eze Family	1,000,000
10.	Sir Dr. Emeka Enejere	1,000,000
11.	Sir Hon. Dr. Patrick Asadu	1,000,000
12.	Sir Emma Abugu	1,000,000
13.	Ifeanyi Mba	750,000
14.	Sir Dennis Agbo	600,000
15.	Sir Barr. Chukwudi Chukwuemeka	500,000
16.	Uzo-Uwani L.G.A. (Mayor Cornel Onwubuya)	500,000
17.	Anonymous	500,000
18.	Christian Nwude	300,000
19.	Sir Lazarus Ugwanyi	300,000
	TOTAL	19,450,000

Others who are not in this team but have donated towards the Cathedral project within the year include:

S/N	NAME	AMOUNT PAID
1.	Sir Dr. Nonso/Lady Prof. Ogonu	175,000
2.	His Excellency Rt. Hon. Chibuike Amaechi	500,000
3.	Chinyere Ugwuanyi	23,000
4.	Ven. A. N. C. Ogbochie	50,000
5.	Bro. Jonathan Mba (USA)	70,000
6.	Dame D. Joy Ugwuegede	200,000
7.	Engr. Jonathan Agbo	500,000
8.	Engr. Victor Amorha	200,000
9.	Stephen Okolo Esq	100,000
10.	Sir Cyprian Agbo	50,000
11.	Sir Samuel Ekwueme	250,000

12.	Barr. Samuel Otobo-Eze	100,000
13.	Bro. Ngonadi (Ngobros)	500,000
	TOTAL	2,718,000

We continue to pray to our faithful father for these ones that have entered into this partnership with Him, that He will remember and reward them unto the fourth generation.

We are believing God that the remaining money to complete this project will be realized after this Synod.

Overall, a total of thirty nine million, six hundred and eighty one thousand, four hundred and eighty Naira (₦ 39,681,480) has been committed into the Cathedral project between our last Synod -November 2012 and 17th September 2013. May God bless Sir Ugo Nwoji our Engineer, Sir Arch. Innocent Agbo and Bro. Matthias Oti.

We also want to inform this body that one of my friends and a friend of Sir Dr Nwoji, Engr. Okwui Emejulu, CEO of Akiota Works Ltd, on hearing about the conditions of my official vehicles, gave us a million Naira to support the purchase of a new car. May God remember this and reward him.

20th Anniversary of the Diocese

The Diocese will be 20 years next year – (1994 – 2014). We have decided to celebrate it in a gentle manner as we have our silver jubilee few years ahead.

On 15th June 2013, a 47 man committee was inaugurated at the Diocesan Secretariat Conference Hall to plan and execute a successful 20th Anniversary celebration for the Diocese. The Committee chaired by Hon. Ogbonna Idike, includes the following:

1. Hon. Ogbonna Idike *(Chairman)*
2. Sir Barr. Onyinyechi Ugwulor *(Vice Chairman)*
3. Ven. Chinedu Onah *(Secretary)*
4. Rev. Daniel Amoke *(Asst. Secretary)*
5. Ven. A. N. C. Ogbochie *(Member)*
6. Ven. C. C. Eze “
7. Ven. O. Ekpunobi “
8. Rev. Can. Emeka Ezea “
9. Rev. Can. Kingsley Obeta “
10. Rev. Joseph Chukwuma “
11. Rev. Joel Ugwuoke “
12. Rev. Robinson Agbo “
13. Rev. Kenneth Onah “
14. Rev. Emma Isiwu “
15. Rev. Daniel Onah “
16. Sir Prof. Micah Osilike “
17. Sir Felix Amoke “
18. Sir Barr. Nnaemeka Ogbonna “
19. Sir Innocent Agbo “
20. Sir Robert Agbo “
21. Sir Dr. Nonso Ogonu “

22.	Sir Levi Idoko	“
23.	Sir Tagbo Ugwu	“
24.	Lady Nkechi Ikpeze	“
25.	Dame Hon. Nkechi Omeje-Ogbu	“
26.	Lady Dr. Añuli Okoli	“
27.	Lady Prof. Chika Ogonu	“
28.	Lady Mary-Rose Ngwu	“
29.	Sir Daniel Okolo	“
30.	Lady Promise Okonkwo	“
31.	Prof. Johnson Urama	“
32.	Bro. Sunday Asogwa	“
33.	Mrs. Caro Ajogwu	“
34.	Prof. Willy Ugwuanyi	“
35.	Bro. Samson Ugwuishiwu	“
36.	Hon. Oke Ukwueze	“
37.	Dr. Edwin Omeje	“
38.	Dame Uche Igbokwe	“
39.	Dr Mrs. Amaka Ejimchukwu	“
40.	Mrs. Kate Nnamani	“
41.	Mrs. Gladys Onah	“
42.	Mrs. Ngozi Ogbu	“
43.	Mrs. Ijeoma Ugwu	“
44.	Lady Ijeoma Nwoji	“
45.	Dr. Zachariah Ayogu	“
46.	Dame Dr Selina Ugwoke Adibua	“
47.	Mr. Chijioke Onah	“

During the inauguration, the Committee was charged with the following specified points of Reference:

- (a) To plan a very successful 20th Anniversary celebration of the Diocese.
- (b) To Organise Bible Quiz competition among the children, youths, women and men of the Diocese.
- (c) Organise football tournament between Archdeaconries the final of which will be played within the week of the Anniversary.
- (d) Organise Grand Finale with specific Merit Awards to individuals that have labored in the Diocese, both before, during and after inauguration.
- (e) Mobilize the Churches and members for thanksgiving at the church level.

The Anniversary celebration will take place in May instead of January. This is to give room for the completion of the Cathedral Roofing as we are planning to make use of the new Cathedral site for the event.

The Committee took off immediately and had made proposals which will be communicated to this house by its Chairman at the appropriate time.

Christian Fathers' Fellowship (CFF)

The Christian Fathers' Fellowship is waxing stronger. The Fellowship held her 2013 Annual Conference at St. Stephen's Church, Ogrute. The theme of that Conference was "The Ancient Paths" (Jer. 6:16) through which God spoke to us clearly. The chief speaker in that conference was Most Rev. Dr. E. U. Ezuoke, the Retired Archbishop of Aba Province and Bishop of Aba Diocese.

The Fellowship's Benedictus Petroleum gas station project is ongoing. Our four tanks have been laid, registration with the Corporate Affairs Commission done and 2013 Tax Clearance obtained. Also Provisional approval by the NNPC has been secured to commence business. Already construction of Mini Mart is ongoing and we believe God that before next year's Synod, pumping of fuel from that station must have commenced.

This year's Archdeaconry and Parish Conferences for the Christian Fathers' Conference did not take place in all the Archdeaconries and Parishes. Mandate has been given that **EVERY** Parish **MUST** organize CFF Conference between March and April while Archdeaconry conferences should take place between May and June next year.

The Fellowship will host Enugu Provincial Men's Association here in Nsukka in December this year. More information on this will be passed across as soon as the executive takes decision on that.

We do appreciate the Chairman of the CFF and the team of his executives for their dogged efforts in making such giant progress. May the Almighty God meet your heart desires.

Women Ministry

We must appreciate God for the Ministry of women in this Diocese. Indeed, Women Ministry is an enviable gift from God to us and we cannot underestimate her role and position. From Friday 25th - Sunday 27th April 2013, the Ministry through her Action and Outreach Wing launched out an aggressive outreach to Igga. It was an Evangelical/Medical outreach which featured house-to-house evangelism and free medical services. People benefited spiritually and medically by this outreach.

The Ministry also carried out an outreach at Ezimo-Agu from Friday 20th - Sunday 22nd July 2013, titled, "Thy Kingdom Come, Oh Lord." About 120 people gave their lives to Christ during that programme.

These are two of the three churches they are nurturing in the Diocese with full sponsorship where they are spending lots of money to build them.

A lot of programmes were organized during the period under review for her various units such as Seminar, Teachings, Workshops, Bible Quiz and Skill competitions.

From Thursday 5th - Sunday 8th September 2013, the Ministry had her 2013 Annual Conference at Edem-Ani. It was a huge success and a glorious time with God.

We also wish to announce to you that the production of bottled water by the Women Ministry's Table Water Factory is in progress. All the satchet and bottled water being used in this Synod are their products.

Additionally, everything is being put in place for the take off of the construction of the second phase of Bethany Plaza. It is our belief that before next year's Synod, business must have begun in that second building.

We must have to appreciate the President of the Women Ministry, for an articulate, meticulous but silent worker – Mrs. Ifeoma Agbo and her administrative crew who are making things to happen in this Diocese through this Ministry. May the Almighty God abundantly bless you.

Diocesan Mission Partners

God has been manifesting Himself gloriously through this unique evangelistic/missionary arm of the Diocese. There has been a continuous growth since her inception, eleven years ago. You will recall that our Diocese had been sending out missionaries outside the Diocese from 2005. Ever since then, there has been steady demand of these youth missionaries by many Dioceses. In 2009, thirty (30) missionaries were sent to Ikwo Diocese, thirty (30) to Makurdi Diocese in 2010, thirty two (32) to Oji River in 2011, six (6) to Udi Diocese and thirty (30) to Enugu North in 2012. This year, six (6) missionaries were sent to Irele/Eze-Odo Diocese in Ondo State, and eleven (11) to Etche Diocese in Rivers state.

Locally, 143 missionaries served in different Churches and Parishes in the Diocese. About 800 persons accompanied these youths back to the Diocese at the end of the mission trip from their various mission grounds both locally and outside our Diocese.

The most fascinating in all the activities of these missionaries are the exciting testimonies they come home with. Those that went to Ondo state (Irele/Ese-Odo Diocese) caused a great revival in the land. They covered four different Parishes/Communities, the Cathedral, Ajagba, Igbotu and Akotobo. Miracles of salvation of souls, healings and deliverances were confirmed, and huge numerical increases in the church attendance was recorded.

The story from those that covered Etche was not different. At a particular town called Nihi, a church that initially had only twenty members; at these youths' arrival grew to one hundred and six (106) before they left. They raised about 100 missionaries for the diocese before they returned. Already they are requesting for training as they are planning to send out their own missionaries next year.

Within the Diocese, countless testimonies abound, for instance,

1. A 2nd church was planted at Inyi in Enugu-Ezike, and thatched house built with a sign post.
2. At Ohebe-Dim, revival broke out and some young boys who were followers of Odo masquerade cult renounced their membership and decided for Christ. About six of them came back with these youths as missionaries.

3. At Okpaligbo Obollo-Eke, a herbalist was converted and a mad boy was also delivered. The boy returned with the missionaries.
4. Two native doctors were also converted at Ukpabi Nimbo.
5. Another mad man was cured after prayers by the missionaries at Amalla Orba.

A lot of testimonies abound, which for time and space, cannot be included here.

About sixteen mission volunteers were posted as pastors to some of the newly planted Churches after one week intensive training at Bethsaida Institute of Leadership and Missions at Okpuje. Seven of them concluded their work in August, remaining nine still in the field. Following this year's advertisement, about twenty three people have volunteered. Their training will commence immediately.

We do request that Churches and Parishes where these missionaries have served should endeavour to maintain this revival fire brought by these youths through intensive follow-up and discipleship programmes. Study materials are available at the Diocesan bookshop in Bethany Plaza.

Churches and Parishes are encouraged to take good care of these missionaries when posted to them.

Due to the vastness of the area of coverage, this arm needs a bus for supervision and monitoring. We request good spirited individuals to assist in this regard.

We use this opportunity to thank the Chairman of Diocesan Mission and Evangelism Board – Ven. Chinedu Onah and the Youth Co-ordinators – Bro. Odinaka Eze and Bro. Christian Opata and other members of the Organizing Committee who are co-ordinating this teeming youth missionaries. The Almighty God will not forget the labours of your love.

Prison Ministry

In our last year's report on our Prison ministry, we highlighted some of the challenges that faced this ministry in spite of the huge successes recorded. Among them was the stigmatization of the released inmates by the society which exposes them again to criminal activities. Secondly, was a challenge of denominational bias by our sister denominations.

God is helping us this year to overcome some of these challenges. Through your prayers and consultations with the Legal team of the Diocese, more than half of our Chapel members regained their freedom and they all were warmly accepted by their people. Denominational antagonism is no more as pronounced as before even though it still exists. Some of the released inmates who had the touch of God through our ministry are indicating interest in full time ministry.

You would recall that during the last year's Synod, offering was raised in support of this ministry. I want to announce to you that about fifty three thousand (N53,000) was realized. May the Almighty God bless you greatly. We also thank the Women Ministry for supporting this Ministry with fifty thousand Naira (N50,000). This money helped the Ministry tremendously to make the little achievements they made so far. Inmates like

Ebenezer Olinya, Jidefor Onah, Pius Ugwuja, and Chukwudi Okwor got their freedom through the Ministry. We are hoping and praying that more of them will soon be released too, and become better citizens.

In other to ensure effectiveness in this ministry and give the needed pastoral attention to inmate in the prison. The Prison Ministerial Team is to be enlarged. We therefore appoint the following to work under Rev. Edwin Agbo as the Chaplain. They are:

1. Rev. Emmanuel Isiwu
2. Rev. Samuel C. Eze
3. Rev. Chukwudi Elejere
4. Rev. Samuel Olinya
5. Rev. Innocent Okoh
6. Dr. Joseph Ezema
7. Dr. Edwin Omeje
8. Bro. Austin Chibuike
9. Mrs. Jane Ewe
10. Evang. Sunday Asogwa
11. Mrs. Obiageli Onah

Needs

1. Establishment of a sound library for the inmates. It has been noticed that good Christian books play a major role in transforming the lives of these inmates.
2. Acquisition of speakers to be mounted in the eight (8) cells of the prison. This will facilitate the preaching of the Gospel especially in a situation where warders prevent the inmates from going to the Chapel due to denominational bias.

You will recall that it was adopted during our last year's Synod that every arm/organization should pay ten percent of her collection after their organizational week except the Women Ministry and Christian Fathers' Fellowship (CFF) who should decide on their own what they would give for the Prison ministry. It was only the Women Ministry that responded positively; despite letters of reminder sent to the other organizations. So we mandate that any organization that did not comply with this directive will no longer have their week in the Diocese.

On your behalf, we promised to help in refurbishing the carpentry workshop at the prison.

We pray for God's abundant blessings upon the Women Ministry and all that have blessed the Prison ministry.

Triumphant Ministry

Triumphant Ministry was inaugurated on Sunday 17th February, 2013 at the Chapel of Spiritual Renewal, in the Bishop's Court.

The beginning of the journey was on the Diocesan Night Vigil held on 25th January 2013, when a burden for a monthly Night Vigil came on me. As the days went by, the burden became heavier and vision clearer. The Lord started to speak to me about an interdenominational prayer convocation that is targeted at touching the people and the

land with the “Power Gospel”. He said it should be a Night of word, worship and warfare, and that our brother Rev. Dr. Ebuka Moses Omeke should co-ordinate it.

When I shared it with Rev. Dr. Ebuka, he confirmed that it was from the Lord by saying that God had already told him such a thing two years ago but he did not understand how to go about it.

On this confirmation and agreement, a committee was set up to carry out this vision.

Those appointed include Rev. (Dr.) Moses Ebuka Omeke (Co-ordinator), Dr. Edwin Omeje (Assistant Coordinator), Evang. Sunday Asogwa (Chairman of Technical/Electrical Subcommittee), Bro. Augustine Chibuike (Works Chairman), Evang. Obumneme Ozioko (Prayer Leader), Rev. Canon Nnamdi Ijeudo (Counseling and Ushering Leader), Bro. Nnamdi Eze – Media/Publicity and other members of the Committee.

The maiden Triumphant Night Programme took place on Friday 8th March 2013 with over three thousand participants in attendance. Since then, the programme has been held regularly at the new Cathedral site every second Friday of the Month. The attendance has increased steadily till date with an average of over five thousand (5000) persons who are mostly from various denominations outside the Anglican Communion. A lot of testimonies are being recorded in every meeting. Souls are being added to the Church, with healings and deliverances from hidden curses and incurable diseases.

We sincerely appreciate all the churches that have happily released their public address systems and musical instruments for this programme. May God enlarge your coast. We use this opportunity to appeal to Parishes in the Diocese to be involved in this God-given vision which is a blessing to the land of Nsukka and beyond.

We also appreciate the organizing team led by Rev. Dr. Ebuka Omeke for their dogged effort and dedication in ensuring the sustenance of the programme despite numerous challenges. Rev. Dr. Ebuka Omeke, one of us and a gifted prayer minister, has been the major speaker and God has been using him tremendously. The Almighty God will continue to bless this team of organizers beyond their imagination in Jesus name, Amen.

We are currently facing the challenge of having a state-of-the-art equipment to be able to carry such a huge crowd. Pray for us and if God touches you to partner with Him in this project, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Christian Marriage and Family Life Ministry

Marriage, as it were, was instituted by God. He designed it to be a place of companionship and enjoyment (Gen.2:20-25). But at the fall of man the emphasis shifted to the number of children the woman is able to reproduce. This new model came when Adam renamed his wife Eve (the mother of all the earth).

Marriage as God designed it, was meant to be where two people that fear God, would in oneness and chastity beget children and bring them up in the fear of the Lord. These decent home units will in turn make up a decent and sane church and consequently, the Society. But the agenda of Satan and Satanists are diametrically opposed to God's design and are

antichrist in form. Satan and his agents will not even want any marriage at all. Being the man of lawlessness, he advocates a situation where people do not even marry, where sexual immorality is enthroned, and men like beasts would mate with any woman they see. Whether the woman becomes pregnant or not would not bother the man because there is no commitment. A man loosely marries any woman he sees in the name of polygamy without any of them really staying close to his heart. With this scenario, a morally loose society will abound where no one is anywhere to painstakingly bring up children in the fear of the Lord. But we the children of God have said no to this agenda. Our homes must be as the manufacturer – God, designed. The situation of your marriage is not just your business. It is not just about you. It is about the Gospel. It is about the Church of Christ. Our Lord Jesus said in the Bible that *marriage, as it was in the beginning is meant for his children*. If yours is not conforming to the pattern of Christ, you are making him a liar and you are giving room for the unbelievers to blaspheme the Gospel and our salvation. You are saying that there is no difference between us that are born again and others. So we must partner with the Holy Spirit of God to ensure that our homes are how God designed and intended them to be. Satan in this 21st century, is aggressively making desolations of everything Christian and Godly. Same sex marriages are being legalized. The worst part is that the western world is trying to force Nigeria and other African countries to legalize immoral marriages and enter into reprobacy as they have already done. But it shall not be our portion in Jesus' name. As a Church, we want to take a proactive measure in addition to prayers or criticism and condemnation, to align ourselves to God and recover marriages and families from the devil's plan of total destruction.

We will recall that in the early days of Anglican Church in Igbo land, we had all over the places Women Training Centres called "Amanwanyi", where women were prepared for marriage. They are no longer there and the result is obvious in today's marriages. While we may not adopt exactly that, it will give us an insight to what we need to do.

We therefore set up a Ministry to be known as Christian Marriage and Family Life Ministry to help us in recovering of marriages and families. The following are members of the ministerial team.

1. Rev. Prof. N.N. and Prof. Mrs. P. Osadebe
2. Ven. Steve and Dr. Mrs. Mabel Dimelu
3. Ven. Chijioke/Hon. Dr. Mrs. Kay Onyechi
4. Ven. Obidi/Mrs. Azuka Ekpunobi
5. Rev. Can. Samuel/Dr. Mrs. Amaka Obeta
6. Prof. Emma/Dr. Mrs. Ekpereka Ibezim
7. Sir Dr. Nonso/Lady Prof. Chika Oguonu
8. Dr. Shedrack/Dr. Mrs. Ijeoma Asogwa
9. Engr. Prof. Sam/Mrs. Ojiugo Enibe
10. Mr. Michael/Mrs. Ifeoma Nwambaekwe
11. Rev. Can. Chris/Mrs. Ngozi Obileke

In addition to other things the Lord will lay in their hearts, they will do the following;

1. Develop a manual for marriage counsellings.
2. Organize workshop for clergy and wives on marriage/family issues.
3. Raise and train "marriage trainers" at least a couple in every Archdeaconry.

4. Organize couples forum, annually in the Diocese.
5. Use every available avenue including social, print and electronic media to teach on Christian marriage and family life.

Need for Discipline in the Church

In the 2nd colloquium organized by the Council of Knights of the Diocese on July 20, 2013 at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul, Nsukka, the Registrar of the Diocese in his paper, decried the increasing and impalpable indiscipline among the Priests and Lay in the Diocese. It is such acts of indiscipline that have adversely affected the relationship of the Priests and Lay in the Diocese. It is awesome and in fact disheartening that in the past, because of lack of understanding and improper adaptation to Christian principles and practices, the relationship of the Priests and Lay has been unhealthy, devoid of good Christian virtues. Most times, it looks as if there are power tussles in the church especially in the handling of vital projects. This, indeed, is wrong.

A Priest who is not disciplined nor submits to constituted authority is a misnomer. Such is already an impediment to his calling and ministry. A Priest who does not recognize due process in the handling of an issue will certainly not know when he is trying to wash his dirty linens in the public, to the utter embarrassment of his profession and followers. Consequently, such exhibition of undisciplined behaviors will only ridicule, instead of transforming one's ministry.

Lack of humility and unfaithfulness are the bane of our human existence and mistrust.

Moreover, a situation for instance where the Chairman of a Committee in the Church will ignore the church committee that appointed him or the Priest in charge to present a report to the whole congregation is abnormal, or where a member of the church will invite the police to the church to breach peace and cause disorderliness is condemnable.

It is clear that there is obvious indiscipline both on the part of the Laity and the Clergy in the Diocese. And we cannot dodge our responsibility of ensuring peace and orderliness in the Church of God committed into our hands.

While we pray for true spirituality and spiritual maturity among us and employ the word of God in planting the fruit of the Holy Spirit, we will adopt the following disciplinary measures.

- Henceforth, elections to Parochial Church Committees (PCC) must be monitored by the Diocese to ensure that they are democratically done. The Archdeacons should monitor the elections in their respective Archdeaconries to ensure they are democratic and report to us.
- Again, people are advised to follow the due process of lodging their complaints – Through the Vicar to the Archdeacon to Bishop or where the Vicar or Archdeacon is connected with the matter; through the Synod Secretary or Registrar, to the Bishop.

- Henceforth, any future indiscipline in whatever form and lack of due process in the handling of matters in the Diocese will be meted with appropriate sanctions.

Consequently, to ensure discipline and due process, we hereby set up a Diocesan Disciplinary Committee made up of the following;

1. Sir Barr. E. O. Ugwulor – *Chairman*
2. Ven. G. U. Nnamani
3. Ven. Chinedu Onah
4. Sir Prof. Micah Osilike
5. Sir Dr. Ugo Nwoji
6. Sir Prof. Noble Nweze
7. Prof. B. G. Nworgu
8. Dr Austin Nkwocha
9. Lady MaryRose Ngwu
10. Mrs. Chiazor Igboeli
11. Dame Dr. Uche Igbokwe
12. Rev. Can. Samuel Obeta – *Secretary*

The terms of reference of the Committee are as follows;

1. To report any noticed case of indiscipline by any member of the Diocese to the Diocesan.
2. To investigate any reported or noticed cases of indiscipline and make recommendation to the Diocesan.
3. To organize Seminars/Workshops either at Parish, or Archdeaconry levels to help the church have a better understanding of Christian Conduct and character, Church Structure, and the Constitution etc.
4. Advice the Diocesan on proactive measures to be taken to ensure discipline in the Church of God.

Demise of Canon Anselm Ogbaje

With pains and sorrows, we announce to this house the demise of one of our gallant soldiers in the Lord, late Rev. Can. Anselm Ugwu Ogbaje on Mon. 29th July, 2013 at the Lagos University Teaching Hospital after a protracted illness. It is painful because he died in active service contrary to our desires and prayers, and few months to retirement from active service.

Rev. Can. Ogbaje died at the age of 63 yrs, when he had already been notified about his retirement by the end of next year, 2014. He has already been buried at his home town, Umuopu, Enugu-Ezike on 29th August 2013.

The Diocese has decided to support the family by paying our late brother's salaries to them for the period of sixteen months, when he will be due for retirement. May the Almighty God continue to console and strengthen the family in the name of our Lord Jesus, Amen.

Scholarship to Late Rev. Can. Linus N. Ugwu's Son

We would recall that in 2009, we also lost our vibrant Priest, Rev. Can. Linus N. Ugwu at his prime age while serving at St. Philip's Church, Ozalla. At his death, he left behind his wife with three young children who were still in Primary and Nursery Schools. Presently, the first son has completed his primary school and gained entrance into Secondary school. The Diocese has also decided to award scholarship to his first son for his secondary and tertiary education. We would call to mind that the Diocese did the same to the family of late Ven. Christian Ogbu who left behind, a wife and young children on 3rd January 2011. We believe this can be a great assistance to the family.

NEWS FROM ENUGU PROVINCE

During the year under review we held our Provincial Councils successfully at Udi and Afikpo Dioceses respectively under the able leadership of the Archbishop – Most Rev. Dr. A. A. Madu. The following are important information from the Province.

1. The Clergy of the Province successfully held her maiden conference in April this year at the Cathedral of Good Shepherd, Enugu.
2. Our Diocese will be hosting the Provincial Prayer Convocation by second week of October this year.
3. The Provincial Men's Christian Fellowship will also be hosted by Nsukka Diocese, this year in December.
4. Enugu Province will host the next General Synod of Church of Nigeria in September, 2014 at Enugu. A committee to plan this has been set up with Rt. Rev. Dr. E. O. Chukwuma as Chairman.

CHURCH OF NIGERIA MATTERS

Since the last Synod, we have held two Church of Nigeria Standing Committee meetings in February and September respectively.

The first one was held from 5th to 9th February 2013 at Our Saviour's Anglican Church, GRA, Benin City, Edo State. The theme was "Overcoming the Challenges of our Time." Some of the major issues raised includes - A new name for the Anglican Television which is now ACNN - Anglican Cable Network Nigeria. It was also reported that the equipment for the network had been delivered and will start operation soon. Others issues deliberated on are:

1. Information on GAFCON, DIVCCON, UK Chaplaincy.
2. Non-payment of Clergy/other workers salaries in many Dioceses which became the major highlight of the committee meeting.

During the meeting, a committee, of which I am a member, was set up to investigate and report to the church why some Dioceses are owing huge sums of money to their workers.

In all the meeting was well organized and well attended by several dignitaries including the Executive Governor of Edo State, Comrade Adams Oshomole who also represented the President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan. Other details are in the Appendix.

The September Standing Committee was held at St. Peter's Yenagoa with mixed feelings because of the abduction of the Dean and host Archbishop – Most Rev. I. G. Kattey three days to the meeting.

However the meeting was held and the following were the outcome:

- The constitution of Church of Nigeria to be amended.
- Areas to be looked into are meetings of Church of Nigeria, Power to Provinces and age of Provincial Archbishops.
- ACNN was commissioned by President Goodluck E. Jonathan on Tuesday 11th September 2013.
- Reports of committees on Non-payment of Clergy salaries.
- 2014 budget.

Other issues discussed are contained in the Primate's address, Pastoral Letter and Communiqué shown in the Appendix.

Retired Bishops

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1. Rt. Rev. J. Akin Odejide | - Ifo |
| 2. Rt. Rev. Samuel Abe | - Ekiti |
| 3. Rt. Rev. Samuel Chukwuka | - Isu-Ikwuato |
| 4. Rt. Rev. Peter A. Adebisi | - Lagos West |
| 5. Rt. Rev. Prof. Emmanuel Iheagwam | - Egbu |
| 6. Rt. Rev. Michael O. Ipinmoye | - Akure |
| 7. Rt. Rev. Matthew Osunade | - Ogbomosho |
| 8. Rt. Rev. Marty Minns | - CANA |
| 9. Rt. Rev. David Benh | - CANA |

New Bishops

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Rt. Rev. Nathaniel Oladejo | - Ifo |
| 2. Rt. Rev. Christopher Omotunde | - Ekiti |
| 3. Rt. Rev. Manasses Okere | - Isiukwuato/Umunochi |
| 4. Rt. Rev. Simeon Borokini | - Akure |
| 5. Rt. Rev. Geoffrey Okorafor | - Egbu |
| 6. Rt. Rev. James Odedoji | - Lagos West |

Newly Presented Archbishops

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------|
| 1. Most Rev. Edmund Akanya | - Kaduna |
| 2. Most Rev. Benjamin Kwashi | - Jos |

3. Most Rev. Prof. Adebayo Akinde - Lagos
4. Most Rev. Dr. Segun Okubadejo - Ibadan
5. Most Rev. Dr. Caleb Maduoma - Owerri

New Dean

The Most Rev. Ignatius C. O. Kattey now becomes the new Dean of Church of Nigeria by succeeding the Most Rev. Ephraim Ademowo.

We wish them God's grace and anointing in their new assignments.

GAFCON II

The second edition of the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON II) will be held in Nairobi Kenya from 21st to 26th October 2013. About 450 delegates comprising Bishops/Wives, Clergy and Laity will be attending this conference from the dioceses in Church of Nigeria. Nsukka diocese will be sending five delegates - My wife and I, the Chancellor - Sir Hon. Justice F.I.N. Ngwu, Synod Secretary - Ven. T. O. Ugwuishiwu and our representative at Church of Nigeria General Synod - Prof. Mrs. Ngozi Nnam . We appeal to churches to be faithful to their obligation on this to enable our delegates have a smooth participation.

St. Matthias Fund

This is one of the good things with regard to welfare and growth of Dioceses that have happened in recent times. The third edition of this fund raising took place on 24th February 2013. Our Diocese took part in the exercise and we were able to raise the sum of **one million, eight hundred and twenty nine thousand, two hundred and ten naira (₦1,829,210)** which has been paid to Church of Nigeria Office Abuja.

We appreciate all the Churches that were faithful in remitting all the monies raised in our Dioceses.

DIVCCON III

The third edition of Divine Commonwealth Conference (DIVCCON III) was held at the Ecumenical Centre Abuja between Monday 5th to Friday 9th November 2012. A good number of our members attended and participated effectively. The unique thing about this conference is that those that attend once will always want to continue because of the spiritual benefits. We thank the Churches that sponsored their Clergy/Wives and members. This year's edition will be at the same venue from Monday 18th - Friday 22nd November 2013.

The committee organizing this for us has done a nice job by mobilizing up to twenty five members of the Diocese to register. The registration is still on till the end of October. Please see Sir Dr. Ugo Nwoji, the Chairman, or Can. Ugo Ijeudo, the Secretary of this committee. We appreciate their labour.

EFAC National Convention

At the end of the 2013 EFAC National Convention held at Gwagwalada, it was announced that 2014 edition will be hosted by Nsukka. A committee on this will be set up before the end of the year. We should see it as our hosting, not just EFAC.

The New Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Nsukka

On 4th July 2013, Nsukka was agog for the Episcopal Ordination of Most Rev. Prof. Geoffrey I. Onah, the new Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Nsukka.

The Anglican Diocese of Nsukka was fully represented at the service by a powerful delegation comprising:

- ↳ The Bishop,
- ↳ Bishop's wife,
- ↳ Chancellor,
- ↳ Registrar,
- ↳ Synod Secretary,
- ↳ Cathedral Archdeacon,
- ↳ Ven. Steve Dimelu,
- ↳ Rev. Can. Christian Nnadi,
- ↳ Sir Engr. Dr. Ugo Nwoji,
- ↳ Dame Nkechi Omeje-Ogbu and
- ↳ Dr. Ejike Ozioko.

The new Bishop and the entire Diocese appreciated our attendance and the Bishop promised to work with us.

NATIONAL ISSUES

As we continue to pray for our Government and seek the face of God for peace in this Nation, and for her redemption, we wish to draw the attention of our leaders and people to the following issues that touch the lives of people.

Cultural Revival and the Menace of Masquerade in Nsukka Cultural Zone

Culture is the entire way of life of a people which involves the language, religion, artifacts, habits, clothing, signs, symbols, dance and music. It is the fundamental structure guiding the lifestyle of a community. Culture is important and relevant because it transmits to us the past which gives us the reason for the present. There are seven major elements of culture.

1. **Language:** Language is a set of symbols used to assign and communicate meaning. It enables us to name or label the things in our world so we can think and communicate about them.

2. **Norms:** Norms are humanly created rules for behavior.

3. **Values:** Values are anything members of a culture aspire to or hold in high esteem. Values are things to be achieved, things considered of great worth or value. Values are human creations. They are social products and can be renegotiated and changed.

4. **Beliefs and Ideologies:** Beliefs are the things members of a culture hold to be true. They are the "facts" accepted by all or most members. Beliefs are not limited to religious statements, but include all the things a people know and accept as true. Beliefs can and do change. They are often associated with specific social institutions or systems and serve to legitimize those systems.

5. **Social Collectives:** Social collectives such as groups, organizations, communities, institutions, classes, and societies are also collectively produced symbolic social construction. They are defined into existence when people define themselves as a group or are defined as a group by others.

6. **Status and Roles:** Status is not a measure of a person's wealth, power, and prestige. To speak of "high" or "low" status is somewhat misleading. A status is a slot or position within a group or society. They tell us who people are and how they "fit" into the group. Roles are norms specifying the rights and responsibilities associated with a particular status. The term role is often used to mean both a position in society and role expectations associated with it.

7. **Cultural Integration:** Cultural integration refers to how interconnected, complimentary, and mutually supportive the various elements of culture are. The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of contemporary English defines **masquerade** as "drama in verse, often with music, dancing, fine costumes and pageantry". It further described masquerade as "ball in which masks and other disguise are put". The Igbo of Nsukka was divided into two central groups based on the ancestral cults of Odo and Omebe. Some communities are known as Igbo-Odo while others are called Igbo-Omebe. Among the communities that celebrate the Odo masquerade are Ukehe, Aku, Onyohor, Ochima, Ikolo, Diogbe, Umunko, and Udueme, Eha-Amufu, Ngwo, Neke, and Lejja. Those that celebrate the Omaba Masquerade are Opi, Ede-Oballa, Obukpa, Ohodo, Ekwegbe, Lejja, Enugu Ezike and Nsukka. Apart from Odo and Omabe, other communities celebrate Akatakpa such as Orba, Obollo, Obukpa, Ehalumona, Ibagwa Aka and Iheakpu.

The Spiritual Concept of Masquerade Festivals

Masquerade festival commonly is a cultural festival, procession, dance or religious event involving the wearing of mask. It is believed that masquerade bridges the gap between the living and the dead (www.wikipedia.com/masquerade institution). According to Ozoemena and Njeze (1998) "Odo masquerade is conceived of as the incarnation of the dead ancestors who continue to take an active interest in the affairs of their living descendants and relations". The masquerade generally in Igbo land takes up the attributes of the ancestors, gods, or supernatural beings or force drawn from the myths of the

people. According to Amankulor, (1985), "The Festival associated with the Odo is celebrated to mark and recreate the return of the spirits of dead to their living relations". Other forms of masquerade such as Omaba and Akatakpa still share the same attributes with Odo masquerade. If these research results truly depict the mysteries and ideologies of these institutions, you can agree with me that we have been playing with very strong and deadly spiritual entities and principalities. If masquerade was accepted as part of the beliefs and ideologies of our cultural practices in the days of old, the current divine revelation knowledge and enlightenments should not accommodate this menace in our present day community. Its origin, activities, operational dynamics and negative consequences should provoke every average Nsukka man and Igbo man in general to raise a battle cry against their existence. I have always been worried why local or foreign television stations have always represented Africa or Nigeria with numerous masquerades from different localities. I have carefully studied the whole elements of culture and could not see where masquerade fitted into the seven basic elements of cultural definition. **Masquerade to me is a demonic entity sent to mask the true identity of our people.** I don't have any problem with cultural revival but have a lot of problem with masquerade revival. One writer and an advocate of Odo festival in Igboetiti said that Odo masquerade institution could be harnessed to play a great role in Tourism development in Igbo-Etiti L.G.A. and Enugu state in general. According to Andah (1980), "Tourism connotes the mobilization of a people's cultural and natural resources, especially those aspects which make people unique from other people. **The question is, "what is good and unique about our masquerade that has made them so important to be transmitted from one generation to another?** If the government is serious about developing tourist centres, we are blessed with several beautiful landscapes and natural water springs that could be developed and not masquerade. Masquerades have masked our original identity and given the world a false image of our personalities. They have destroyed a lot of lives, damaged property worth millions, bewitched and enslaved many of our youths, infringement into people's freedom and devastated the future of our current generation.

Hear this: Mr Boniface Ukwueze a staff of Ikenga Hotel Nsukka was killed with a dane gun in February this year at Nguru Nsukka while celebrating the outing of his village's masquerade.

At Iheakpu Awka, Mr Chukwuma Eze, the son of Attah nweze was killed in February 2010 by Akatakpa Ibagwa Aka. In this same episode, property worth several millions of naira were burnt down with fire in protest for the death of this young man. In July this year a fifty year old man and father of five children, Mr Emma Nnamani lost his life mysteriously through a masquerade worn by Chinedu Iyioke at Umuofiagu Ukehe. Should we begin to talk about occultic exposures of our young ones who enter into several forms of initiations to fortify themselves to be able to carry their masquerades to outing centres which consequently frustrate their lives and future? Masquerade culture trains young men in different forms of wickedness. Some young men that could not convince some girls to become their girl friends have resorted to endangering the lives of their victims through masquerade. Cases also abound where young men on masquerades have raped virgin daughters of some of our respected families. Some young men have sold their lives to extortion through masquerade causing all forms of traffic obstruction and leaving some victims that refuse to settle them beaten almost to death. Spiritually we have encountered several cases of people losing fortunes including babies in their womb just after waking up from dreams whereby masquerades from their localities were pursuing or beating them. If Nsukka cultural zone is serious about reviving the culture of the land I think we should

focus on reviving our ancient heritage such as family relationship and industry. Nevertheless, culture is not static, it is dynamic. We shall take what is valuable and leave what is not valuable. **But mark this, the God of heaven and our future generation will surely blame us if we fail to take a drastic decision on masquerade festival and its revival saga today.**

New Face of Boko-Haram in the South East - Uzo-Uwani L.G.A. of Enugu State as Case Study

The new face of Boko-Haram in the South East with Uzo-Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State as a reference point is the consistent killing and rapping of the populace and destruction of farms by Fulani Cattle Rearers. At Nrobo, Abbi, Ugbene, Opanda etc, they roam, maim, kill, rape and destroy farm lands and freely relocate to another area.

They are obviously above the law. In some cases they harvest crops from people's farms and even cocconut by cutting down the tree itself.

We are calling on the President, the state Governors and members of the National Assembly to shake off their indifference and come out courageously against this worrisome threat to our National unity.

In the North, Southerners are massacred by Boko-Haram, and in the South by the Fulani Muslim masquerading in the cloak of cattle rearers.

This is a security challenge that should be taken seriously as the bombing of churches and sporadic shootings in the North where thousands of our people have been sent to their untimely graves.

The Fulani cattle rearers should be confined to the North or the government should develop a modern ranch for them.

The Menace of Trailer Drivers on our Roads

The menace of trailer drivers especially the Dangote trailers known by Local palance as Dangote's death train or moving train on our roads now has reached an alarming stage. They have no knowledge of traffic rules or they have vowed not to adhere to it. With their reckless driving in our public highways they kill other passengers in other vehicles with reckless abandon. 14th of September will remain a dark Saturday in Enugu State. On that day, three trailers of Dangote were allegedly involved in a multiple accident within 9th Mile axis. Other vehicles with their occupants were said to have burnt to ashes.

The fact is that these trailers kill and abandon their vehicles, atimes with the cement and disappear. We wonder what the law enforcement agents are doing.

Again we wonder if the owner of Dangote has lost count of his trailers and goods. It is unbelievable but our concern is the carnage on our roads by these drivers who use their vehicle as tools of mass destruction.

Nsukka Tipper Drivers

This group is our own local Dangote drivers. They are noted for their hit and run attitude. Between January 2012 to September 2013, we have lost many souls due to this group of drivers, especially along Ogurugu road to Eziani or to Obimo. In Nsukka they are masters of the road and it's alleged that their union make returns to the Police and Road Safety people who have remained unruffled over these class of drivers. They also boast of being under insurance cover by a notable team of lawyers. We declare that this should not be a reason to destroy lives or disobey the law.

Nsukka 2015 - The Stand of PDP Over Nsukka Candidate

Recently it was widely reported that the Peoples Democratic Party in Enugu state resolved to zone to Nsukka the political slot of Governorship aspirant. It was an antidote to the tension over the inability of all Nigerians to consider the creation of Adada State. Many leaved a sigh of relief. We must commend His Excellency Barr. Sullivan Chime, for keeping to his words. That's a sign of statemanship at an elevated pedestal. May the Lord keep you and those at the National Assembly who saw the justice of the matter.

Shockingly the political class in this zone seem not to appreciate this. I say so because, in Nsukka now, almost every politician is claiming to be the David of our time.

It is a dangerous trend that may ultimately be a good omen to the political class who are not disposed to Nsukka extraction living in the lion Building come 2015.

It is like some are paid to play a spoiler game to their people. For now we are calling for prayers and concerted effort by all to save this lofty dream from being a mirage.

Everybody must not be governor. It will be important to note here that an Nsukka Governor must have the true Nsukka Spirit in him/her. His/her life must be noted for;

1. a life of service.
2. a life of humility.
3. a life of empathy.
4. a life of sincerity/truth.
5. a life devoid of greed.
6. a life of peace.
7. above all godly life.

A Plea to NUJC to Appoint Judges in South East Especially in Enugu State

For many years now, no new Judges have been appointed to the South Eastern states especially Enugu state because the serving Judges have not meet up with the required returns. We feel that appointment of Judges should not be refused to Enugu State and others because of low returns from Judges. While we appreciate the issue of return as a measure to ensure productivity among Judges, it should not be taken in isolation - the welfare of Judges, working condition and other related matters should be looked into.

Our concern is the effect of this on the generality of people. With some Judges retiring and no new ones to refill the vacuum, we will have few hands to attend to the numerous cases in the courts - Justice to many will be delayed and therefore denied.

Therefore we humbly appeal to NUJC to appoint new Judges for Enugu State for an effective judiciary in the state and for equity.

SYNOD THEME: *PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD*

TEXT: *1 COR. 3:1-9*

“And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building.” (1 COR. 3:1-9)

INTRODUCTION

Last year was the beginning of the 7th Synod of the Diocese. In that first session, the Lord began, as it were, a new phase of agenda for us: the agenda of His church.

The burden the Lord laid on our hearts as the theme of that synod was: “I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH”. The Lord through that theme showed us clearly, His passion for, and His person in the Church. The message was too broad for that Synod. We had to present what the Lord permitted us to know for the time, trusting Him for the grace of time and opportunity to advance His passion for the church.

God’s passion for His church was strongly expressed in that theme: “I will Build My Church” in the following words: *“by my power of conscious decision, deliberate choice of action and preference, I am determined, for it is my wish and desire to increase gradually in size, strength, intensity etc. and develop my Church”*.

With the excitement that such a faithful promise would arouse in one’s heart, it may be assumed that God wants His people to be passive/ active in the church and the world- having no role to play in the actualization of Divine purpose in the church and the world.

In response to such a notion, it has pleased the Lord to lay in our heart for our study in this Synod, the issue of “Partnership with God”. A true, awesome and glorious revelation – that God in His wisdom has predestined that it is only in partnership with His children that He will carry out His intentions for the church and the world. “From the beginning, God’s intention was more than just rugged individualism. Man was designed for partnership.” (R. D. Pace).

In order to properly appreciate the message of our theme, we shall first of all, lay a background to the theme, and delve into the implication of the theme to the ministry of the Church, then draw a conclusion.

BACKGROUND

1 COR. 3:5 - 4:5

THE LETTER: The first canonical epistle to the Corinthians is believed by almost all modern scholars to have been written by Paul. The letter itself claims to be written by Paul and Sosthenes (1:1) and it will be unreasonable to doubt this ascription. It was written from Ephesus in the spring before pentecost (16:8-9) between AD 52-55.

Paul wrote firstly to react to the unfavourable oral report brought against the church by 'Chloe's people' (v.11),- probably the slaves of one of the members of the church; secondly to respond to a letter containing certain questions that the Corinthians wanted clarified, brought by three members of the church- Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus.

The wide range of issues handled in the letter and its informal approach makes it difficult for scholars to locate a central theme for the epistle. M.C Tenney said; first Corinthians is the most varied in content and style of all the epistles of Paul. The topics discussed range from schism to finance and from church decorum to the resurrection. Every literary device known to writing is employed in its pages; logic, sarcasm, entreaty, scolding, poetry, narration, exposition - in short, it is written in the same style as Paul would have carried on in a conversation with the elders of Corinthians had he been present with them. It is thoroughly informal in its approach rather than being a set essay on theological subjects.

However, to Findlay, the central theme is "the doctrine of the cross in its social application," that is to say; the letter depicts the conflict that follows when Christian experience and Christian ideals of conduct come in contact with the concept and practices of the pagan world. But Mark Dever, in his book, the Message of the New Testament, does not just identify the central theme as the church but emphasised its aptness. He said, "But 1 Corinthians is more than its disparate parts, whether those parts are famous or obscure, clear or confusing. The point of Paul's letter is one we need to hear today; he writes to teach the Corinthians about the church. Particularly, Paul discusses what should characterize the church, and why these particular characteristics must typify the Church."

Paul and the Church at Corinth.

Paul planted the church at Corinth and this was of immense importance to him. He laid the foundation and others built on it. To Paul, the existence of Corinthian church is enough proof of his apostleship, which many Corinthians were not willing to recognise (chapters 1-4 and 9).

Paul remembers how he brought the gospel to the Corinthians marked with "weakness, fear and trembling" (1Cor. 2:1-3). Some of the details, we can glean from this epistle and the narrative of the founding visit in Acts 18:1-17. For example: conversion of Crispus (1Cor.1:14; Acts 18:8), the contact with Priscilla and Aquila (1Cor.16:19; Acts 18:2-3), and his labour in Corinth with his own hands (1Cor. 4:12; Acts 18:3).

He spent at least 18 months in this city. During this period he raised believers, both Jews and Gentiles (1Cor. 1:22-24; 7:18), who were baptized in the name of Christ (1 Cor. 1:13) received the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13), meet for meals and worship in homes (1Cor. 11:17-34). Despite these evangelistic labour performed in love and harmony, the cordial relationship between Paul and his Corinthian children of faith did not last.

Apollos, a man noted for his eloquence and rhetoric prowess, came to Corinth after Paul and his ministry among them, was helpful in many ways. He attracted many of the Corinthians by his learning and his polished presentation of truth.

John Barclay noted that; “in the Graeco – Roman world, ‘wisdom’ was closely associated with rhetorical skill (lofty or “plausible’ words, 2:1,4), which was central element in ‘secondary education and was highly prized by a public which enjoyed listening to finely crafted speeches in the court room, assembly, or theatre.”

On this basis, the elite Corinthian Christians clearly despised Paul’s speaking abilities (2Cor. 11:6) but admired his letters (2Cor. 10:10). So when they heard Apollos – an eloquent and “wise” preacher, it was clear why “some were for Apollos”.

Another sign of conflict between Paul and the Corinthian Church can be deduced from Paul’s reliance to their reception of an earlier letter. This letter seemed to have urged a moral discipline on the church that was not well received.

The City of Corinth and the Corinthians Church

Corinth at the time of Paul was a flourishing cosmopolitan and commercial city, refounded as a Roman colony in 46 BC, with a popular seaport exposed to multiple influences from East to west.

Though Corinth had a reputation for commercial prosperity, it was also synonymous with evil living. The very word *Korinthiazesthai*, - to live like a Corinthian, - had become part of the Greek language, and meant to live with drunken and immoral debauchery.

William Barclay noted that, “in addition to these crude sins, there flourished far more subtle and little known vices which had come in with the traders and sailors from the ends of the earth, until Corinth became synonymous not only with wealth, luxury, drunkenness and debauchery, but also filth.

The church in Corinth was made up of people coming from the above described culture and live among them, so the traces of *Korinthiazesthai* was not lacking even in the church.

John Barclay in the Oxford Bible Commentary raised three issues as to the nature of the church in Corinth.

1. Recent scholarship has highlighted the importance of the social divisions in the church in Corinth and has posited the disproportionate influence of a small elite group within the church, whose attitude to their social inferiors and whose class-determined interpretations of the Christian faith underline many of the issues addressed in this letter.
2. The church in Corinth covered a broad social spectrum, with a few highly placed individuals who probably played a major role in shaping the life of the church and its relations with wider Corinthian society. The divisions at the Corinthian Lord’s supper (11:17-34) indicate the problem inherent in staging communal meals across such a spectrum, and the ‘knowledgeable’ who cared little for the scruples of their ‘weaker brother’ in relation to sacrificial food (1 Cor. 8-10), may have been those of higher status whose contacts with their social equals would have been greatly disrupted by taking a

scrupulous stance on this matter. Other topics raised in this letter may also be related to wealth and status.

3. The leaders of the church in Corinth seem to have prided themselves on their status as 'spiritual people' (3:1-3; 14:37). That involved a particular eagerness for spiritual gifts (12:1; 14:12), and also a high evaluation of 'wisdom' and 'knowledge' (2:6; 8:1-3) and the conviction that other so called 'gods' are really shadows. Their 'spiritual' status also encouraged a sense of 'authority' - particularly the permission to eat whatever they wished and to use their bodies however they liked (6:12; 10:23). H.L. Wilmington, describing life in the church at Corinth observed that. "There is no modern day local church problem that is not covered in 1 Corinthians. The church was filled with theological and personal problems."

Going further, Wilmington raised fifteen flash points of the errors of the church. These include;

1. They had perverted the doctrine of baptism (chp. 1)
2. They were bragging about what little human wisdom they had (chp.1)
3. They were carnal to the core(3:1)
4. They had deceived themselves(3:18)
5. They had defiled their bodies (3:17)
6. They were puffed up (4:18)
7. They were tolerating horrible immorality (5:1)
8. They were suing each other in heathen courts (6:1)
9. They were confused about marriage (7:1)
10. They have abused the doctrine of Christian liberty (8:9)
11. They were not dressing properly in the house of God (11:6)
12. They had made a mockery of the Lords supper (11:30)
13. They have corrupted the gifts of the Spirit, especially tongues (14)
14. They were confused on the subject of the resurrection (15)
15. They had let down on offerings (16)

In addition he (Wilmington) divided the epistle into two where the first division covering chapters 1-6 is titled -"seven corruptions", namely:

1. Following human leaders, Paul, Apollos, Cephas 1:10-17
2. Favoring earthly wisdom (1:18-2:13)
3. Floundering in the flesh 2:14-3:7
4. Forgetting future judgment 3:8-23
5. Flattering themselves 4:1-21
6. Failing to discipline 5:1-3
7. Fragmenting the body of Christ 6:1-20

These errors in the Corinthian church are by no means outdated; they are right here with us and are still found wherever the gospel comes in contact with pagan civilization.

Despite the divergent nature of the content of the epistle, occasioned by the writer's attempt to solve the problems, it is obvious that division, strife or party spirit formed the ground from where our theme germinated. This encapsulates the core of Paul's appeal which covers not only chapters 1-4 but also many other parts of the epistle. Though the divisions did not stop their meeting together, they damaged the life of the church, preventing her maturity and negating her calling to love.

Fundamentally, Paul saw in the lining up behind different leaders, a misapprehension of the gospel, whose value-system is wholly opposed to the values of power and wisdom which the Corinthian competitiveness exhibits. So he attacked the problem at the root by directing the Corinthians to recognize the counter – cultural impact of the gospel of Christ crucified, in its; MESSAGE (1:18-25), CHOSEN RECIPIENTS (1:26-31) and PROPER MEDIUM (2:1-5).

Moreover, to puncture the pride of the Corinthians which was based on their claim to be spiritual and wise, Paul raised issues that countered the claim, the jealousy and quarrelling evidenced in their claims of belonging to rival leaders (3:3-4) reveal precisely how immature they are! The party groupings which set up rival claims to status in wisdom or in the excellence of the chosen leader indicate not how mature but how immature the Corinthian church is, their bids for superiority show just how inferior they are, operating on the level of mere squabbling humans rather than as gifted and inspired people of the spirit.

Going further to deal with this cankerworm of factionalism, John Barclay observed that, "Paul constructs another line of argument against such factionalism, this time focused on leadership and its evaluation. To align oneself with one or another leader is, for Paul, to commit three cardinal errors

1. To place leaders on a pedestal, where they do not belong.
2. To play them off inappropriately against one another; and
3. To reward them with human praise rather than leaving to God the assessment of their work. These three themes are the principal elements in the discussion of leadership in 3:5-4:5

It was in an attempt to redress these errors that he exclaimed; "For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry ye are God's building." (1Cor.3:9); from where our theme "PARTNERSHIP WITH GOD" is taken.

Before we move further, I want to note here that the Epistle, 1st Corinthians shall be our book of study from now till the next Synod. We therefore plead with Clergymen and Pastors to organize "a well planned expository preachings" and "teachings on the vital issues raised in the letter" during our worship and other meetings of the Church. We believe God will do wonders with these in our lives.

What is Partnership?

Partnership can be defined as a strategic **alliance**, or **relationship** between two or more people. It is an arrangement in which parties **agree to cooperate to advance their mutual interests.**

Since humans are social beings, partnerships between individuals, businesses, interest-based organizations, schools, governments, and varied combinations thereof, have always been and remained commonplace. In the most frequently associated instance of the term, a partnership is formed between one or more businesses in which partners (owners) **co-labour to achieve** and **share profits and losses**. Partnerships exist within, and across, sectors. Non-profit religious, and political organizations may partner together to increase the likelihood of **each achieving their mission** and to **amplify their reach**.

Successful partnerships are often based on trust, equality, and mutual understanding and obligations.

Our Partnership with God

You will recall that at the beginning of this discourse, we hinted that the import of our theme “Partnership With God” is to show that, in God promising to Build His Church, He does not in any way want His children to be passive instruments, or dormant/inactive machines, neither would He want them to be parasites. Rather, He created men and women as co-workers (partners) with him; as R. D. Pace puts it; “...from the beginning God’s intention was more than just rugged individualism.”

Mark Dever X-rayed this individualism in his discuss on what he called the “Big Idea”, he said;

“...individualism and self-indulgence rule the day....

Everything from the hours of our workday to the gender of our sexual partner is taken to be a matter of individual preference. The individual conscience is revered and treated as an inviolable demi-deity to whom ultimate allegiance is owed. Even in the Christian religion, the worship of God is in danger of being drowned out by the worship of self-esteem and felt needs. God is praised insofar as he makes us feel better about ourselves.

Big ideas often define an era, like liberty in the eighteenth century, or progress in the nineteenth century, or- I would argue- individualism today. Such ideas provide the mental background noise in a culture, something so pervasive it is almost unnoticeable to those in its midst. These ideas act as the grids through which we interpret our experience of the world, life, relationship, work, even religion....

One idea that was prominent in the New Testament and in the history of Christianity, but which is almost imperceptible today, is the idea of the church.... Amid all the apparent prosperity of churches today, the church lacks the corporate element whereby it conceives of itself as itself.

By “corporate element” I mean that, when we gather as Christians on Sunday mornings, we do not gather merely to have personal devotions together. The church Service is not just your quiet time. We do not gather to pray, sing, and read scripture like we do the other days of the week at home except that on Sundays we do it with more people around because it is encouraging. No, we come to participate in the life of our Church. And when we come, we come not as individual consumers to do our spiritual shopping for the week, seeing what’s of use down this aisle of singing or down that aisle of prayer, looking over the sermon special, browsing through post-service conversations, and taking it all home in

our carts for personal use. We actually assemble as a living institution, a viable organism, one body.

Let me ask....What is the use of the Church?

Now, if you answered that question in terms of what the Church does for you, you have missed something crucial- something very clear in the New Testament that may be imperceptible to our eyes because of the fog of our culture. The Biblical answer to "what is the use of the Church?" does not begin with what the Church does for you as much as it begins with what it does for God. What it does for you is addressed, but only by putting what it does for God first. When we begin to understand this, we turn the corner from a self-centered involvement in the Church to a full blown, God-centered life together to which God calls us for his own purpose.

"For we are laborers together with God, ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building!! (1Cor 3:9); Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there He put the man he had formed.... The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it" (Gen.2:8, 15).

Brethren, it will be appropriate here to think about the biblical definition and purpose of work. Some may see work only in negative terms—as part of the curse, with no redeeming value. This is completely unbiblical. Many Christians, however, view work as only an *instrumental* good. Practically, this means that work—while not necessarily being bad—is seen as serving as an instrument or means to other goods, such as providing for your family, contributing to missions and donations to the church, or charities, and so on. As an instrumental good, the work itself is viewed as merely a means to an end and not an end in and of itself.

However, the Bible teaches that work is a *fundamental* good—a part of our fundamental purpose on earth. Work is a part of God's original design. God himself worked in creation and *continues* to work, both sustaining and redeeming his creation. Prior to the Fall—in paradise—man worked in *partnership* with God. This last point may be surprising to many, but consider what we are told in the Scripture. First, what did God do in the beginning? He "created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). This was work. The Genesis narrative provides the order of God's creative work, culminating in the creation of man—the only being in all of creation made in His image. Thus the first point is that if God works, then we—being made in His image—are also to work. In fact, the creation of man (male and female) in Genesis 1:27 is immediately followed by God's blessing and the assignment of responsibilities or *work*.

Genesis 1:26,28-29 points to God's creatures as workers: "Then God said, let us make human beings in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.... God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.' Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food."

When we say that we are made in the image of God, what do we mean? One thing it means is that He was/is a worker and we are workers.

Ecclesiastes 3:13 speaks of work as a gift from God: "that each of them may eat and drink and find satisfaction in their toil-this is the gift of God."

In contrast to the idea that God created and then walked away (leaving creation in the hands of man) is the fact that Adam worked in partnership with God. At a philosophical level, we are told, God "planted a garden in Eden" (Genesis 2:8) and put Adam in the garden "to work it and keep it" (Genesis 2:15). God created and *sustains* (see Colossians 1:17); and mankind stewards or gives care to God's creation. However, God also continued to partner with Adam at a practical level. In Genesis 2:19, we are told, "God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them" Adam walked and worked with God.

Of course, we know man severed this partnership through his disobedience and sin. Man's relationship to God and work would change as a result. Man would find himself alienated from God and work would become burdensome. Nonetheless, God did not abandon man nor did man's initial responsibilities change. Immediately following God's description of what life would now be like for Adam and Eve in their fallen state, God alluded to an added work, the work of redemption, in which he would make all things new (see Genesis 3:15).

God, in his mercy, has chosen to maintain His partnership with man. However, this partnership—with those whom he has chosen—also includes the work of redemption, which is not exclusive to just a personal *spiritual* work. God's ongoing work in history (sustaining and redeeming) is all-encompassing, involving both the material and spiritual dimensions of his whole creation.

The Old Testament is filled with stories that testify to this fact, beginning with the construction of a *big boat* by a real man named Noah. God didn't drop an ark from heaven; he chose Noah, gave him the specifications, and told him to *build* it, saving (physically and spiritually) a remnant of man and every type of animal. When Israel was in Egypt, God didn't supply food from the heavens when famine came upon the land, He had chosen a man (Joseph), years earlier, to *plan, prepare and store up food* for the salvation of Israel and "all the earth" (see Genesis 41:57). In both instances, God partnered with men He chose (working as a shipbuilder and administrator, respectively), using material means, to accomplish his redemptive purpose in history.

In the Old Testament, these redemptive purposes were geared toward the preservation of a particular or "chosen" people through whom the Messiah, the promised King, would come. In the New Testament, the King finally came, initiating His rule or kingdom—a thought in an unexpected way—and this kingdom begins the restoration of all things, including making alive those who were once dead. *It is we, the believers in Christ, those redeemed by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, those that are Born Again, who have been made alive in Christ - that is the CHURCH, that God calls to partner with Him in this ongoing work of redemption.* "We are laborers together with God..." (I Cor.3: 9).

A story was recently told of an English publishing firm that came together for their annual dinner in Exeter Hall. There were more than two thousand partners at the table. It was a strange sight to behold such immense crowd of men and noting that they were of one firm. They had adopted the plan of making all their employees partners, and it had worked most successfully.

That picture leads our thoughts to a higher relationship. Our work "for" God is a great partnership. "We are laborers together with God." When the Lord Jesus was on earth, He always declared that His work was done in partnership with His Father. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."(Jon.5:17) "The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works."(Jon.14:10) And He taught His disciples that their work must be in similar partnership with Him. "He that believeth in Me, the works that I do shall he do also."(Jon.14:12) And when He left them, Mark gives us this last picture of His ascension: "He was received up to heaven and sat on the right hand of God and they went forth and preached everywhere the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following."(Mk 16:19-20)

Let us look at the two sides of this partnership:

I. ***GOD'S PART***

1. He pays our debts and establishes our credit.

God saw us as a company insolvent and ruined, and not only so, but also criminal. And He pays all the old obligations and puts all His own credit to its account, making our standing as good as His own, even in the sight of God.

A story was told of a business man who had a dishonest clerk. The man embezzled considerable sums of money from him, but at last was brought to repentance and became a true Christian. He came to his employer, after a great struggle, to confess his wrong, expecting not only dismissal, but perhaps also, severe punishment. The merchant heard his story and was deeply moved, for He knew that he might easily have escaped detection; and, when the contrite clerk closed by saying, "Of course, I cannot expect that you will ever employ me as a servant again," he replied, "No, I never can employ you as a servant again. But," he added after a pause, "you shall be a partner in my business, for I know the worth of such a testimony as that you have just given." Not often does man act so nobly, but this is just what God has done. He has assumed our liabilities, has cancelled our crimes, has even suffered their consequences Himself, and has also taken us into His own complete fellowship and made us joint heirs in all His riches of grace and glory.

2. He supplies all the resources and capital of the business.

He does not send us, like Pharaoh's taskmasters, to work without materials, but He invests all the resources that we need, Himself. He does not even limit our capital, but says to us, "God is able to make all grace abound to you; so that ye always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound unto every good work."(2Cor.9:8). We often see after the titles of business corporations the word "Limited." But there is no such condition upon our incorporation in the service of God. It is all grace, always, with all-sufficiency in all things,

and unto every good work. Our service is not to be measured, therefore, by our natural talents, our narrow sphere, or any condition. We can draw of Him to any extent for His work. A wealthy merchant said once to a dear servant of God, "Draw on me any time you need, for it will be honored." So God says to His workers, Where natural strength fails, and natural talent is insufficient, His power and His wisdom meet all demands. When you have to cry, "We have no might against this company, neither know we what to do," (2Chron. 20:12), then remember, "the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth fainteth not, neither is weary; there is no searching of His understanding," (Isa. 40:28). When nature cries, "We are not sufficient even to think anything as of ourselves," (2Cor.3:5a), faith can answer, "But our sufficiency is of God; who hath also made us able ministers of the New Testament." (2Cor.3:5b).

3. He entrusts to us the chief work of His kingdom.

He does not do it Himself and leave us simply to gather up the fragments, but He Himself does all that is difficult and trying, and leaves to us the joy of harvest.

Down into the wild wilderness He came and cleared the ground and prepared the soil with toil and pain; and then to us He left the delightful task of rearing the fruits and harvest of His husbandry. He is the strong vine, sending out its roots into the deep places of strength and life and supporting all the branches, but to us, the branches, He gives the joy and riches of bearing the fruit. He spent thirty-three years amid the shame and toil of the workshop, the judgment hall and the cross, and when it was over He had less than a thousand followers in all the world. And to His disciples He gave thousands of souls in the first month after His ascension. "Greater works than these shall they do," He says, "because I go to My Father." (Jon. 14:12). To us He has given these greater works. Angels would be glad to do them, but mortals are privileged instead.

4. He prepares the workers.

All true workers must be prepared. And the learning of a valuable business or art is no small advantage in secular affairs. For His service our Master, Himself prepares His workers. "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." (Eph.2:10). The fundamental thing the Lord needs to do in our lives for effective, noiseless partnership with Him, is to take us to His quarry site of diverse dealings where He would cut off all pride, arrogance, wrong motives and wrong perceptions concerning His work. If we penitently allow Him to deal with our lives, He would chisel out of us a new brand of life so that when we are at the temple site building His house, there would not be need for any noise. The noise of clamour, sycophancy, vainglory, self-seeking which is very loud in the body of Christ today speaks of the fact that we have not been at the quarry site for diverse divine dealings. We are made with a special view to this very thing, that we may be adapted to good works. Adaptation is necessary in everything. Without it the fish is lost on the land and the fowl in the sea and the quadruped in the air. Each has its natural element and action, and this is easy and spontaneous. The organ is adapted for music, the orange tree for fruit bearing, and the rose for sweet perfume. To try to make a rose grow oranges, and an organ act as a locomotive, would be foolish and idle business. And so, to expect an unregenerate soul to do Christ's service is vain. It succeeds as well as a blacksmith would at a surgical operation, or a ploughman at a fresco painting. Therefore, Christ prepares His instruments. He makes them for this very end. He puts into them the instincts, impulses and endowments that will lead them to choose, to love and to accomplish the results

intended. And He especially fits each one for the service assigned. Fitly framed together, they severally fulfill their respective relationships and spheres. Each of us is created, regenerated and divinely educated for the very place we are called to fill. Paul planted, Apollos watered. The great Author of our spiritual training and the source of our power is the Holy Ghost. He is promised to every true servant of Christ as a "Spirit of power, of love and a sound mind." (2Tim.1:7). Without Him and His gifts we can do nothing acceptable to God or effectual with men. He must open to us the Scriptures, by which "the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2Tim.3:17). He must lead us into the separation and sanctification in which we shall be "meet for the Master's use and prepared unto every good work." (2Tim.2:21). He must reveal to us the things of God which are spiritually discerned and speak through us "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power," (1Cor.2:4) or our words shall be idle and vain. And He does prepare His "chosen vessels" and His "polished shafts," and make them "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." (2Cor.10:4).

5. He not only prepares the instruments, but He also prepares the works.

Let us quote again from St. Paul: "Created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before prepared that we should walk in them." (Eph.2:10). Our works are prepared for us, and we have but to walk in them. This is an unspeakable comfort. We have not to make them, but to receive them and wear them as habits and garments. Just as in the drama, the actors may have to wear a great many different costumes, but they do not need to make them. They are provided for the piece; they have only to put them on and wear them in the proper place. At one time it is the part of a workman, at another a merchant, at another a prince; but the proper robe for each is provided, and they have only to put it on and wear it. So the Lord Jesus prepares our work for us. At one time, we need the garment of love, at another power, at another wisdom; now we must understand a human heart, again we must weep with a mourner, again we must warn a hardened heart, now we must cheer a depressed one; again we must lead it to the Saviour, or the Sanctifier, or the Healer; or yet again we must meet some perplexing issue or decide at some great turning point in life. But all is ready, laid up for us in Christ our Lord, and only needing to be transferred into our life in action and experience. So that in the service, as much as in the experience, it is not I, but Christ; not our works, but His works in us; we being but the pen, and He the Hand that guides it; we but the voice, He the Word that speaks by it; we but the vessel, and He the precious Living Water that fills it. This makes our work so easy. It is spontaneous service the overflow of the heart. John Bunyan says of his book; "I wrote because joy did make me write." So Jesus says of true service in the Spirit: "Out of His belly shall flow rivers of living water." (Jon. 7:38). Most persons find their work a burden. The true servant of Christ finds the Lord carries both him and his burden, too. We begin our work for the Lord with great zeal and try to help the Lord and His cause. We feel at last that He needs not us or our eager impetuosity, and we are glad to lay the burdens of His work on Him. A little child insisted on carrying an armful of his father's books upstairs. The father told him the load was too heavy, but the little fellow insisted and started with his load. By and by they came tumbling down in confusion, and he burst into tears and stretched out his tired hands to his father for help. The father took him to his arms, and then lifted the books and carried them, too. So He takes us and our service, and we serve Him best when we rest upon His breast and just let Him use us as He needs us and fills us. The disciples thought they could keep and manage Him when they took Him from His weary toil and put Him on a pillow in the hinder part of the ship to sleep. But they were glad to put themselves in His care ere long

and awake Him to save them from destruction. And such service is as strong as it is calm. It moves with the mighty tides of heaven. "I labor," Paul says concerning it, "according to His working which worketh in me mightily."(Col.1:29).

4. And He rewards the work and shares the recompense with us as fully as if we had done it all.

"He that reapeth receiveth wages and gathereth fruit unto life eternal."(Jon.4:36). I cannot tell you what that reward will be. But you and I know something of the joy of bringing a soul to Jesus even here. We know something of what it means to have someone meet us in after years and tell us how some word or prayer of ours had once helped or saved them. Oh!, what will it be, there, to find them coming from the East and the West, bringing the souls they have won, and recognising us as the instrument of all their blessing, while he shall say: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto these, ye have done it unto Me." (Matt.25:40). "He shall make them sit down to meat, and shall Himself come forth and serve them."(Luk.12:37). "They shall shine as the stars forever and ever." They shall be rulers over many things and shall enter into the joy of their Lord. They shall share His kingdom and His throne and be promoted to grander service through the millennial years. Oh!, then we will not regret the nights of watching and days of toil, but wish we could have done and suffered more for so great and far-surpassing a recompense.

II. OUR PART

1. To recognise the work as His

A great deal of Christian work is our work, and He only is consulted and asked to help it. True Christian service is given to Him, and done as His and at His bidding, and under His absolute responsibility and ownership. It is not, What am I doing for the Lord? But, What is the Lord doing through me?

Let us consecrate our work as well as ourselves. Then we shall not hear so much about our church, our connection, our cause, and our work, but like the men of old, shall "dwell with the King for His work."

2. To recognise the necessity and obligation of our co-working

God could do without us. He could, by His direct omnipotence, Himself, do all He uses us to do. But He has appointed human agency in the salvation of men and the redemption of His world. He has arranged for the supply of the world with the Living Water by the pipes and channels of our hearts and hands. And, therefore, if we fail to do our part, there is a failure in the supply. What a grief it must be to Him to know that there is enough in the resources of redemption for all mankind, and that it cost Him His life-blood; and yet, through the unfaithfulness of His servants, so many are left to perish without it. We are members of Christ, and just as we have seen a large and generous heart and a gifted head hampered by a debilitated body, and hindered in carrying out its noble aims and purposes by paralysed limbs, so often, Christ looks in vain for hands and hearts to carry out His merciful and mighty plans for a lost world.

He has so ordered it that His grace must reach others through us, and it is a great crime against His love as well as against the souls of men to fail to work together with Him. It is as great a crime as it would be for a generous benefactor to leave a large inheritance to the poor children of the city and deposit it with certain trustees for this end, and these trustees, instead of giving it to the persons for whom it was intended, should spend it on themselves and let the children starve in neglect. Or, do we realize that we are His trustees, His representatives, His agents, His body, His hands, and feet, and voice, through whom He has condescended to work; and shall we not be true to our glorious Head and the trust that He has given us?

3. To work in His way and plan

Much work is destroyed by being done in our way. He demands that if we build in His temple, we must build on His plan, on the foundation He has laid according to His specifications and with the materials He has supplied. "See that thou make all this according to the pattern showed thee in the mount." "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Matt.28:20). Many have often seen and approached ministry as a commercial venture. The Church is not an "enterprise," or "den of robbers" but a "house of prayer", divine temple, built of divine materials by the Holy Spirit through consecrated men and women. There is too much of man's "enterprise" about it. Instead of the simplicity of the Gospel, the power of the Spirit, the agency of truth, faith and prayer, the personal holiness of a consecrated membership, the testimony of people separated from the world, the power of personal work for souls, an open door for the poor and lost, an aggressive work to reach the outcast and hopeless, the free and voluntary gifts of God's children, a full Gospel for spirit, soul and body, and a church of which a living Christ is the Life and Lord we have smart preachers and fashionable people, operatic choirs and ungodly trustees, church fairs and Sunday school theatricals, religious concerts and charity balls, splendid church edifices and vast religious endowments, pew rents which exclude the poor, philosophical essays which exclude the Gospel and the Saviour, culture and scholasticism which leave out the Holy Spirit, and a mass of man's machinery which leaves little room for the supernatural operation, or the power of the Living God. The work of the apostles was under the direction of the Holy Spirit. Natural gifts were not despised, but all was fused into the living fire of the Spirit of power and consecration. The planting of Christianity in the continent of Africa was wholly due to the obedience of Philip to the Holy Spirit, bidding him leave a great work in Samaria and go down into the desert. The result was the conversion of the Prince of Ethiopia, and the first spread of the Gospel among the Gentile nations. The planting of the Gospel in Europe was also due to the obedience of Paul to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, forbidding him to preach in Asia and Bythinia, and calling him to Macedonia. The same God is with us still, and if we would let Him lead us, we should see the same glorious results.

4. To work in His strength

The reason why civilized nations are in advance of the under developed world is because they have learnt the secrets of nature and know how to use the hidden forces of God. For instance, a load that will take villagers here, about a hundred men to drag, will only take an American engineer a touch on the valve of his steam engine to carry. While we use our own strength, the American use the hidden forces of nature. The mighty forces of electricity and steam are only God's power taken into partnership with man for his secular work. So we can take His power into partnership for spiritual work; and, instead of the toil and strain of

our own wisdom and skill, we can put on His strength and use His omnipotence. A touch of God's hand is worth a million human hands.

A company of engineers were lifting an immense and costly obelisk to its pedestal in Alexandria. They had raised it aloft, almost to the level of the base. But it needed one inch more to clear and swing in upon its pediment. The ropes had been strained to their utmost tension and nothing more could be done, without lowering the whole pulleys and mechanism and commencing over. There was a moment of intense disappointment. Man's power could do no more. Suddenly a sailor's voice rang out clear and sharp: "Wet the ropes." In an instant, the engineers understood the simple hint. The ropes were saturated with water from top to bottom. In a few moment, the immense obelisk began to rise, slowly, surely, silently--it has reached the level of the base -- it has passed it--it is swinging clear, it is settling in its place, the cords are loosed--it stands firm and steady on its foundation and a shout of cheers goes up from a thousand voices at the simple touch of power, that came forth from nature at a word. So is the work of God; there is a limit where all our strength comes to an end. The might of a million men cannot go farther, but there is a secret place of power, and one whisper of faith will bring omnipotence so simply, so silently, so easily, yet so victoriously, that earth and heaven will shout the glad notes of praise forever. This is the secret of the work. "But you shall receive the power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me to the end of the earth."(Acts1:8). It is the same old Gospel. Let us put it into our work as well as our souls and we shall find that He is All in all.

The Dividends of the Partnership

This work which is the life and purpose of the church--bears witness to Thy (God's) "kingdom come" into the world, which glorifies God (hallowed be Thy name) and serves as a foretaste of that which is to come when all that has been broken by sin is restored. Where there is injustice (including economic injustice), the church works to enact justice; where there is unrighteousness, the church works to establish righteousness; where there is conflict, the church works for peace. And all of this work, carried on through countless everyday initiatives, is done in love -- love from God, for God, and for others.

Do these adverse conditions, resulting from sin, exist in this country; - our Government/politics, our educational Institutions, our communities and the marketplace? Of course they do, they are everywhere, in fact they exist throughout the world! And this is because someone who ought to be in partnership with God has either not played his part or allowed God to play His part. By directing our vocational activities away from profit-making as the principal purpose (or merely a means to an end) and *toward* the redemption of man and creation, we serve the kingdom purpose of making the in-breaking reign of God visible. This sets right what sin has set wrong and proclaims Christ as both the reason for our life and actions and the only means by which one may enter the kingdom and be saved. This is the broader gospel mission that gives authority to our message; it is in our everyday actions -- including the work we do and how we do it -- that the world will know who we follow and glorify the name of God (see John 13:35, 1 Peter 2:12).

Conclusion

God is almighty. He is a self-existing, self-sustaining Being. With or without us, He can do His work Himself if He chooses to do it as such.

But He has decided to involve us – not because He is weak, or stranded, but because of His wisdom, mercy and grace.

He can effectively do without us, yet He decided to involve us. This understanding should make us humble, so that no flesh should glory in His presence.

Moreover, even when we think we have done our utmost, the power of increase is in His hands. “All we can do is nothing worth unless God blesses the deed; vainly we hope for the harvest-tide till God gives life to the seed...” (A.C.Ainger). He involves us to humble and honour us. He supplies the increase for His own glory.

Let’s then learn to meekly accept His allocation of grace and gifts to us; and joyfully labour with Him while we have the time; trusting Him to bring increase to our limited work.

May the Lord use you and I to effectively build His Church and redeem His creation; may He keep us humble and simple while all glory goes to Him alone who owns the Church.

Please join me as we prayerfully conclude with this Hymn:

TAKE MY LIVE, AND LET IT BE

1. TAKE my live, and let it be
Consecrated, Lord, to thee;
Take my moments and my days
Let them flow in ceaseless praise
Take my hands, and let them move
At the impulse of thy love
Take my feet, and let them be
Swift and beautiful for thee.
2. Take my voice, and let me sing
Always, only, for my King;
Take my lips, and let them be
Filled with messages from thee
Take my silver and my gold;
Not a mite would I withhold
Take my intellect, and use
Every power as thou shalt choose.
3. Take my will, and make it thine:
It shall be no longer mine,
Take my heart: it is thine own;
It shall be thy royal throne.
Take my love; my Lord, I pour
At thy feet its treasure store,
Take myself and I will be
Ever, only all for thee.

Thanks for listening patiently and effectively,

Your Friend, Brother, and Bishop.

+Aloysius.

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APPENDIX I

PRIMATE'S OPENING ADDRESS AT THE STANDING COMMITTEE HELD AT ST PETER'S YENAGOA- 12TH SEPT 2013.

Protocol:

*The President, Commander-in-Chief, Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency **Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, GCFR,***

*The First Lady, Federal Republic of Nigeria, Her Excellency, **Dame Patience Jonathan,**
His Excellency, the Governor of Bayelsa State, **Chief Sieriake Dickson,** and Her Excellency, Wife
of the Governor,*

Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of Nigeria,

The Registrar of the Church of Nigeria,

House of Clergy,

House of Laity,

Distinguished Senators,

Members of the Judiciary,

Members of the State Executive Council,

Traditional Rulers here present,

Invited Guests, the Press Corps,

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I know I am speaking your mind when I say we are happy to be here in Yenagoa, the glory land, the land of Mr. President, and the land of oil wealth, a land of very distinct culture and remarkable identity. I am glad to welcome particularly visitors from Ogbomosho Diocese, whose new Bishop was consecrated here on Tuesday. We congratulate the new Bishop and the whole Diocese.

Permit me to acknowledge the good work of the Diocese of Niger Delta West, our host Diocese, and the Province of Niger Delta. Thank you for being obedient and hardworking, for responsibilities taken and the determination to make things work out smoothly. We want to express our profound gratitude to His Excellency, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, GCFR, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, for his immense financial contribution to the smooth hosting of this Standing Committee. In the same vein, we thank the Bayelsa State Governor, Chief Sieriake Dickson, and the State Government for their contributions. We are immensely grateful to Amb. Dr. Godknows B. Igali, Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Power, for his selfless roles in ensuring a successful hosting of this Standing Committee. May God in His infinite providence reward you all and others too numerous to mention in Jesus' name; Amen. Thank you for opening your doors cheerfully to receive us. May this Standing Committee be a herald of more spectacular blessings for all Ijaw sons and daughters, at home and abroad.

We are happy to note the peace which has descended on Yenagoa. It is no more frequently in the news for violence and insecurity. A serious transformation has taken place here. To God be the glory.

Commendations to the Federal Government: We wish to recognize the sincere efforts of the present administration towards improving the lives of the citizenry by

embarking on major projects all over the nation. We commend the Federal Government on the following strides:

Road Network: There is remarkable improvement on the road network in the country through Federal Ministry of Works and its Agency FERMA, and this has brought no mean relief to the common man.

Airports: The airports have received serious attention all over the nation and this is a welcome development. There are constructions and reconstructions in the airports to bring them to acceptable standards.

Railway: The Government is also doing well in the attention being given to Nigerian railways. The restoration and extension project of the railways is quite commendable.

Power/Energy: This is another basic step taken in the right direction. We commend the commitment of the Government to the provision of power, the power plants being built at strategic places. These projects hold great promises for our future development.

Restoration of Peace: The determination of the government to restore peace to troubled areas of our country is quite commendable. First, the declaration of state of emergency and secondly, the establishment of Army Division in the North Eastern part of the nation. These steps taken are sure signs of determination.

Presidential Visit to China: The initiative of the present administration in establishing and maintaining bilateral ties with foreign countries is equally commended because of its economic implications. The recent visit of Mr. President to China is one of such visits holding out good economic prospects.

Millennium Development Goals (MDG): We wish to also commend the Government on the vigorous pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals especially as it affects the women and the reduction of maternal mortality rate. Visible progress has obviously been made in this area and this has attracted international commendations. We encourage the Government not to be deterred in this noble pursuit by anything.

Politics 2015: Political activities towards 2015 are now unmistakable around the country. Party politics is the legitimate way of coming to political power. I, therefore, wish to urge you to join any party of your choice if you want to represent your people and change the situation of things in the right way. We make a sincere appeal to politicians as they plan, disagree, challenge one another and engage in high political maneuvering, to ensure that the entity called Nigeria is spared from harm. We should not walk into the traps of our external detractors who had already predicted a break-up of the country in 2015. We appeal to our youth to take part in politics but steer clear of political thuggery. You should not allow yourselves to be used for assassination, arson, kidnapping, maiming, looting, intimidation of opponents, etc. Don't die for any political party or any candidate because Nigeria needs you tomorrow. We call on INEC to ensure honesty and transparency, mindful of the weight of responsibility on its shoulders. They should rise above regional, ethnic, religious partisanship and deliver to Nigerians, the truth, the whole truth and nothing short of that.

Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU): We appeal to the Federal Government to find lasting solution to the ASUU strike. We here propose two approaches: one immediate and the other long term.

1. The Federal Government should do everything possible to agree with ASUU in the immediate because the academic, moral, social, etc impact of the strike on the society is enormous.

The Government should find a way, either to privatize the Universities, or get ASUU to be limited to individual Universities such that there will be no national ASUU body mandating even institutions without grievances to go on strike. There is no such body anywhere in the world. Challenges facing any institution should be treated locally without involving others. While the ASUU strike lasts, university lecturers are busy teaching in private universities (most of which lack lecturers) and earning money, and when the strike is over, they will still be paid for the period of the strike. This is highly immoral and must be discouraged.

Stowaway Saga: This matter is already dying down but it should not be so. From what happened, the public is more concerned, not with the boy's bravado behavior, which in itself is a display of lack of parental care and waywardness on the part of the boy, but with the security of our airports. If he had been a Boko Haram agent, the plane would have been blown up and innocent lives perish again. Somebody needs to be held responsible for this national embarrassment at the Benin Airport and should be punished accordingly. We should not trivialize it because it involves human lives in large numbers. We commend the Federal Government for the new face of our airports all over the nation but these good airports without reliable security amount to nothing.

Unemployment: As done in the past, we want to continue to appeal to the Government to explore all opportunities to reduce the unemployment level among our youths. This is the effective way to provide counter justification for the rising crime wave in our society.

Solidarity Visit to Maiduguri: The Primate, our Archbishops, and some others visited Maiduguri to cheer up the people of Borno in general and the Christian community in particular. We received immense assistance from Headquarters of State Security Services, both in Abuja and in Maiduguri. The Archbishops visited the Governor, the Shehu of Borno, C. A. N. Borno State and the Anglican Diocese of Maiduguri. While it will still take quite sometime for normal life to return perfectly to Borno, it is equally true to say that the Federal Government Emergency declaration is working wonders. We commend the Security Agents – Soldiers, Police, SSS, etc for their courage, commitment to duty and patriotism. Worthy of mention is the part being played by Borno youth, popularly known as Civilian JTF. They are helping greatly to arrest Boko Haram members. Looking into the future, Government should begin to plan how to gainfully occupy these youths at the expiration of hostilities. Otherwise they may turn their energies and new confidence acquired in fighting Boko Haram on the public towards negative ends. Borno, Adamawa and Yobe are still subjects of intense prayers-please pray!

We, therefore, commend the Federal government on the declaration of emergency and the seriousness with which it is being executed. The establishment of a whole Army Division in the North East to attend to the state of insecurity is equally a right step in the right

direction. Whether in the North East, North Central or North West, indeed, throughout the country, we call for the maintenance of high alert and vigilance. Security consciousness should not be relaxed. We made token donations to C.A.N. Borno, C.A.N. Maiduguri (to support acquisition of land for cemetery) and to Maiduguri Diocese.

STANDING COMMITTEE THEME:

THEME: *Put on the Whole Armour of God*

TEXT: *Ephesians 6:11*

INTRODUCTION: Ever since the fall of Satan, there has been ongoing battle between the kingdom of light and that of darkness over the souls of men and for supremacy over planet earth. *"Then there was war in heaven. Michael and the angels under his command fought the dragon and his angels. And the dragon lost the battle and was forced out of heaven. This great dragon-the ancient serpent called the Devil, or Satan, the one deceiving the whole world - was thrown down to the earth with all his angels ... Rejoice, O heavens! And you who live in the heavens, rejoice! But terror will come on the earth and the sea. For the Devil has come down to you in great anger, and he knows that he has little time."* (Rev. 12:7-12). John was here granted insight into this incident of the fall of Satan though it happened before the creation of man. Jesus made reference to it when He said, *"Yes," he told them, "I saw Satan falling from heaven as a flash of lightening!"* (Luke 10:18).

It is crucial to understand that there is a spiritual being called Satan, he is not just an evil influence as believed in some quarters. It was out of jealousy that Satan plotted the fall of man into sin and rebellion such that man became like him, without divine nature and powerless over sin (Genesis 3). God made several efforts to salvage man from the powers of the world, the flesh and the devil by giving the law, sending prophets, instant punishments of sins but these only brought about temporal fears. God finally sent His Son, Jesus Christ, who died and rose again, having conquered Satan, sin and death, and restored man to his original position at creation. However, the battle still rages and it is only those who have fully appropriated the work of Christ by faith that can overcome the world, the flesh and the devil. *"But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn! This is not a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan-this rebirth comes from God."* (John 1:12 & 13).

EXPLORATION OF THE THEME AND KEY TERMS: This theme, "Put on the Whole Armour of God" is a command and for deeper comprehension, it shall be broken into three phrases, thus; "Put on" - "the Whole Armour" - "of God".

Put On - The phrase "put on" means to wear something; to be dressed with something; or to be covered with something, etc. When one puts on something, the body is shielded from the outside and so receives protection.

The Whole Armour - What we are commanded to put on here is not mere cloths but armour i.e. weapons of warfare. The concept of "the whole armour" implies that they all work together as one; if you lose one, you lose all. The whole armour, though differently named, must be possessed as one and they all function as one.

Of God – The phrase “of God” means that the weapons we have been commanded to put on are divine, not human or physical but spiritual and of God. They are not manmade, neither are they tangible.

Therefore, the theme, “Put on the Whole Armour of God” is significant and imperative because by becoming Christians, we have been enlisted in the Lord’s army and so need to fight. The whole armour is to be worn constantly and none is to be neglected because the battle between light and darkness is ongoing and fierce. Without the armour of God, man is vulnerable and defenceless before the enemies of righteousness.

REALITY OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE: This battle is chiefly spiritual but with physical manifestations. According to Trevor Newport, in his book, *“Angels, Demons and Spiritual Warfare”*; “Anyone who reads the Old Testament will quickly realize that all the warfare described is on a physical plane and not a spiritual one. However, we can see a type of spiritual warfare in the Old Testament. For instance with the Philistines who were constantly attacking Israel, and anything to do with the Lord.” The battles fought by the Israelites of old were physical but with spiritual mastermind. When God chose Israel out of the nations of the world to be His peculiar people, Israel also became peculiar enemy of Satan, and he fought them constantly through other nations. Satan’s power lies in sin so he will make Israel to fall into sin first so that God is separated from them before he will strike. This was the recurrent phenomenon in the book of Judges – Israel will sin; God will abandon them; Satan will incite a wicked nation to oppress them; they will repent and cry to god; God will hear, forgive and come to their rescue; Israel will suddenly become strong again, overcome their oppressors and repossess their possessions; and after a while, Israel will sin again and replay the circle.

Therefore, the battles were simply spiritual but fought on the physical plane, otherwise, what can one make out of Gideon defeating Midian with just three hundred soldiers? David killing Goliath with a sling and a stone? The little city Ai defeating Israel because of the sin of Achan and Israel conquering Ai after being restored to God? (Judges 7:1-8:21; 1 Sam. 17 and Joshua 7 & 8).

Today, we, the Church of God, have become the spiritual Israel and Satan’s fury has been extended to us. However, in the dispensation of the New Testament, there is a complete paradigm shift of this warfare from the physical to the spiritual. All our battles, even when they wear physical faces, are spiritual and should be understood and fought spiritually. This was why Jesus did not permit His disciples to carry the sword, as the Israelites of old used to do, to kill fellow men perceived as enemies. The Bible records; *“One of the men with Jesus pulled out a sword and slashed off an ear of the high priest’s servant. “Put away your sword,” Jesus told him. “Those who use the sword will be killed by the sword. Don’t you realize that I could ask my Father for thousands of angels to protect us, and he would send them instantly?”* (Matt. 26:51-53). Jesus never referred to human beings as enemies but He spoke of Satan as the prince of this world (John 12:31; 16:11), and Paul later called Satan the god of this world (1Corinth. 4:4). To further buttress this point, the Bible says; *“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh,” and “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”* (2 Corinth. 10:3 & Eph. 6:12). Therefore, spiritual warfare is real and the Church must begin to see the challenges facing her in this generation from this perspective.

WHY PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD? There is need at this juncture to take a broader look at our key text: *“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”* (Eph. 6:10-13). In 2 Corinth. 10:4 & 5; *“for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ”*. Reference is made to the armour of God with different description-as the weapons of our warfare. The prevailing scenario places a demand on us to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might by putting on the whole armour of God. Spiritual battles cannot be fought with human power or wisdom, modern technology with all its advancements cannot suffice. We are not contending against flesh and blood (i.e. fellow human beings even though they can often become instruments in the hands of Satan) but our real enemies are severally described as principalities, powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual wickedness in high places. We are, therefore, to put on the whole armour of God because of the diverse manifestations of the spiritual enemy forces against the Church in particular and humanity in general.

Furthermore, we need to put on the whole armour of God so that we can overcome in the evil day and as well remain standing after each battle, and not to fall or die with the enemy like Samson (Judges 16:28-31). If the Church must live up to the mandate of the Great Commission, and bring solace to troubled and frustrated humanity through the gospel of grace and God’s love, the Church must put on the whole armour of God. The Church as the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matt. 5:13-16) has the duty of helping the Government to contend with these forces in all forms of their manifestations. The Government, if left alone, cannot fight these spiritual battles because even some of their policies could be subject to Satan’s influence through his human instruments in power or at the corridors of power. The Government at all levels do need the prayers of the Church and we must not relent. Below are some areas of manifestations of these evil forces through the lives of some helpless and powerless human beings; which made the putting on of the whole armour of God an urgent necessity:

Homosexuality and Lesbianism - The Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary defines ‘homosexual’ as “a person, usually a man, who is sexually attracted to people of the same sex”; and ‘lesbian’ as “a woman who is sexually attracted to other women.” This tendency, though gaining grounds in some parts of the world with sovereign states legalizing same-sex marriage, remains a perversion, a deviation from the norm and abuse of the gift of sex. The devil has debased human beings into doing what even beasts cannot and they call it human rights. *“For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: and likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”* (Rom. 1:26-28, 32). The Church of Nigeria does not hate homosexuals but recognizes homosexuality as sin because the Bible condemns it in more than one instance.

Therefore, we can neither condone the practice nor approve of those who practice it in whatever form. *“Don’t you know that those who do wrong will have no share in the Kingdom of God? Don’t fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, who are idol worshippers, adulterers, male prostitutes, homosexuals, thieves, greedy people, drunkards, abusers, and swindlers – none of these will have a share in the Kingdom of God. There was a time when some of you were just like that, but now your sins have been washed away, and you have been set apart for God. You have been made right with God because of what the Lord Jesus Christ and the Spirit of our God have done for you.”* (1 Corinth. 6:9-11). That was Paul addressing the Corinthian Christians that some were homosexuals but were delivered by the Spirit of God. God can still deliver today but only repentant sinners, homosexuals and lesbians inclusive. Anyone who has homosexual attraction should come forward to his/her Church leader for counseling, prayer and deliverance.

Post-modernism – In this generation, the advancement of science and technology granted by God as blessing to humanity is fast turning out to be a curse through the agents of globalization. This postmodern culture is being sold to the youths of this generation in large scale through the internet and other electronic media with aggressive secularism and relativism as part of the commodities in this wagon, and they buy them with little or no discretion. Secularism is an ideology that religious beliefs should not influence public and governmental policies and decisions; it is a political position that believes in the separation of Church and state. In this generation, men have become aggressively secular and are doing all things possible to eradicate all references to God even in personal affairs; while relativism bothers on ethics, morality and truth. It is the theory, especially in ethics or aesthetics, with which conceptions of truth and moral values are not absolute but are relative to the persons or group holding them. Proponents of this philosophy hold that nothing is absolutely right or wrong, not even those condemned in the Bible. For them, the rightness or wrongness of an action is dependent of situation and persons involved. According to James 3:15; *“this wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish”* and as such should be resisted.

End-time Anti-Christ Activities – We have been warned of the apostasy and denial of the Lordship and Sonship of Jesus Christ in the last days. *“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.”* (1 John 4:1-3, 5 & 6). “We are called upon to test every spirit. Church leaders and pastors should be mindful of the people they invite to minister to their congregations. In this era of embarking on gigantic projects, the tendency to bring men with “the anointing to raise money” is always there. Such men operate with a strange spirit of calling out names, phone numbers, account numbers, etc. There is so much magic on the pulpit today and Christians must be careful.” This has become crucial because *“even Satan can disguise himself as an angel of light.”* 2 Corinth. 11:14).

Heresies and False Prophets/Prophecies – This is another spiritual disease that is plaguing this generation. Heresy means half-truth and that is what most “mighty men of God” are riding on and exploiting the ignorance of the public. With manipulative and demon inspired prophecies, they emphasize the aspects of the gospel the people would

want to hear, especially the indiscriminate emphasis on prosperity, so they command overwhelming followership. Jesus said: *"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits ..."* (Matt. 7:15 & 16). Unfortunately, people cannot discern them because they do not know the word of God; otherwise, how can people in their right minds be following strange teachings blindly? Some are bond followers of ritualists as pastors and prophets; others get stampeded to death just to meet a man of God. It is almost certain that strange spirits are in control; such was not seen even in the ministry of Christ.

Boko Haram and Militant Islam - The issue of militant Islam/Boko Haram menace has become recurrent negative phenomenon with which Nigeria has, in recent times, been identified before the international community. A situation in which people resist all forms of development, go on killing their supposed opponents in manners most gruesome and that without any form of provocation is out-rightly condemnable. Many Christians have been martyred by this group, Churches destroyed; security agents and agencies are victims of this mindless onslaught and even Muslims are not spared. Satan has so possessed these people that it takes a mature Christian with understanding to discern that they are just helpless instruments in the hands of the real enemy. Jesus said to Peter the night of His arrest; *"Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."* (Matt. 26:52). He also admonished His disciples saying, *"... yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."* (John 16:2). With these in mind, Christians should, in addition to being security conscious and ever ready for self defence, fight this battle more from the spiritual front.

Cultural Revival - There is bound to be problems when people confuse culture with idolatry; the former is the way of life of a people and thus their identity, while the latter is the practice of directly or indirectly worshipping images as gods. Such confusion is unnecessary because *"from the time the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky and all that God made. They can clearly see his invisible qualities - his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse whatsoever for not knowing God. Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn't worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. The result was that their minds became dark and confused. Claiming to be wise, they became utter fools instead. And instead of worshipping the glorious, ever-living God, they worshipped idols made to look like mere people, or birds and animals and snakes."* (Rom. 1:20-23). Cultural revival is a recent but upsetting development all over the country and even in the media. It is even more disconcerting that in this century, people are reviving idolatry in the name of culture and they see the Church as their arch-enemy. The Church having spearheaded spiritual, moral and genuine cultural advancements in generations past cannot sit and watch our society return to darkness in the name of cultural revival. The Church of God must recognize this as an activity of Satan and therefore rise to resist syncretism in all its subtle enticements. In this age of technological developments, we call on our Government and people to channel energies rightly, towards making the most of the opportunities afforded by the pace of developments worldwide.

Non-payment of Clergy Salaries/Stipends and Allowances - To enable our priests put on the whole armour of God and wholeheartedly engage in this spiritual warfare, their welfare must be given priority. *"For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, the labourer is worthy of his reward."* (1 Tim. 5:18). These men of God have families to care for and it will be criminal to keep people working without

paying them as at when due. When we think of 1 Tim. 5:8; *"But if any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel"*; it will only be fair that we care for these under-shepherds committed to our charge. We, therefore, call on our Bishops and Diocesan Boards to work harder to see that such situations are arrested where they exist. However, we must charge the priests not to become instruments in the hand of Satan to defraud the Church and deceive the Bishops because none ever steals from God and prosper.

Malevolent Conglomerates - The ever widening gap between the rich and the poor, in which the rich get richer and the poor poorer, is caused by malevolent conglomerates, and in some cases, wrong Government's economic policies aid them. They keep prices of raw materials very low, and the prices of finished products very high, e.g. cocoa, coffee, banana, garri, etc. also when access to certain business opportunities are officially denied the common man, this is what results-oppression. We are fast becoming like Israel of Amos' days to whom God sent these words: *Thus saith the Lord; For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes."* (Amos 2:6). God expects the Church to rise like Amos and condemn the evils of the day, otherwise, He says, *"I hate all your show and pretence - the hypocrisy of your religious festivals and solemn assemblies. I will not accept your burnt offerings and grain offerings. I won't even notice all your choice peace offerings. Away with your hymns of praise! They are only noise to my ears. I will not listen to your music, no matter how lovely it is. Instead, I want to see a mighty flood of justice, a river of righteous living that will never run dry."* (Amos 5:21-24). It is mere hypocrisy to campaign for peace without a commensurate campaign for justice.

Unemployment and Poverty - Mass unemployment and wide spread poverty has become tools in the hands of Satan. However, these are not excuses to engage in evils by yielding to Satan to do his wish. It is dangerous to be idle always because the idle mind, it is said is the devil's workshop. Work is a blessing from God that was already given even before the fall of man (Gen. 2:15); and the rule of god remains *"whoever does not work should not eat."* (2 Thess. 3:10). He that is not employed should get himself employment with something, not necessarily highly economically rewarding, so as to keep the mind positively engaged. *"Above all else, guard your heart, for it affects everything you do."* (Prov. 4:23). It is dangerous to fall prey of the new generation preachers who only know how you must sow even what you do not have to gain divine prosperity. The only remedy to poverty is to work and prayerfully look up to God for blessings; in this also, we must not neglect the day of a little beginning.

Nudity and Negative Fashion - The female folk are most culpable in this matter as it has become fashionable for them to walk the streets almost naked in the name of fashion. This public show of shame is the manifestation of demons of seduction called the spirit of Jezebel and is already entering the Church. It is not compulsory that brand ambassadors of products must go bare to move the business. But these celebrities that suppose to be role models, not just in their best arts, but also in character, have become stakeholders in this satanic agenda. The ripple effect is that the younger generations imitate these negative fashions faster than could be imagined, and the irony is that these rags in the name of latest fashions are actually more expensive than those cloths that cover the body due to high demand. This celebration of nudity is a prime factor responsible for the increase of rape cases and the Church must rise to this challenge to save the society from moral decadence.

Negative Politicking – There is a common saying that politics is a dirty game but the fact is that politics could be dirty or clean depending on the crop of politicians involved. It is ungodly to want to assume power or perpetuate oneself in power by all means, fair or foul. This is because leaders in all spheres are supposed to be representatives of God. Bible instructs thus; *“Obey the government, for God is the one who put it there. All governments have been placed in power by God.”* (Rom.13:1). Campaign of calumny and selfishness in leadership do not portray a leader as God’s representative. Those who kill to assume power are possessed by the spirit of anti-Christ and they do nothing but plunge the masses into oppression. The Church cannot be silent and watch political darkness eclipse the nation.

Insecurity in the Land – The wanton wasting of lives and property in our land has become a major cause for great concern; the Government must, therefore, continue to improve in its constitutional responsibility of protecting the citizenry. We must remind ourselves that *“except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”* (Psa. 127:1). The situation, therefore, calls for earnest prayers, support for the Government and the much needed assistance for security agents.

Corruption – This is situation of impairment of integrity, virtue, or moral principle; inducement to wrong by improper or unlawful means e.g. by bribery. The Bible condemns bribery in strong terms. *“Take no bribes, for a bribe makes you ignore something that you clearly see. A bribe always hurts the cause of the person who is in the right. The wicked accept secret bribes to pervert justice. Your leaders are rebels, the companions of thieves. All of them take bribes and refuse to defend the orphans and the widows.”* (Exo. 23:8; Prov. 17:23 & Isa. 1: 23). Bribery and corruption have been the bane of development in this nation; funds meant for life changing projects are shared by a few leaving the commoners to wallow in penury and excruciating suffering. God will judge and is judging already. The word of God says; *“like a bird that hatches eggs she has not laid, so are those who get their wealth by unjust means, Sooner or later they will lose their riches and, at the end of their lives, will become poor old fools.”* (Jer. 17:11). This shall be the lot of all those that give or take bribe to pervert justice and siphon public funds, unless they repent and retribute, and the Church should so declare.

THE WEAPONS OF OUR WARFARE: Having x-rayed the battles starring the Church in the face, it is consoling to learn that the church is not helpless. *“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth to the obedience of Christ.”* (2 Corinth. 10:4 & 5). Jesus had earlier said; *“And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any mean hurt you.”* (Matt. 16:19 & Luke 10:19). While writing the epistle to the Ephesians, “Paul suddenly sees a picture ready-made. All this time he was chained by the wrist to a Roman soldier ... As he writes, the soldier’s armour suggests a picture to him. The Christian too has his armour; and part by part Paul takes the armour of the Roman soldier and translates it into Christian terms.” Therefore, in Eph. 6:14-18, Paul outlines the weapons of our warfare which are the armour God has given to His Church, thus; *“Stand therefore, having your lions girt about with the **belt of truth**, and having on the **breastplate of righteousness**; And your feet shod with the preparation of the **gospel of peace**; Above all, taking the **shield of faith**, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the **helmet of salvation**, and the **sword of the Spirit**,*

which is the word of God: *Praying ... in the Spirit ...*" Let us now explain and apply the armour of God enumerated above:

The belt of truth - In looking at the weapons of our warfare, Barclay's commentary offers in-depth but simple and illuminating explanations. On the belt of truth, it says "it was the belt which girt in the soldier's tunic and from which his sword hung and which gave him freedom of movement. Others may guess and grope; the Christian moves freely and quickly because he knows the truth." Truth means presenting the true fact about something or somebody, rather than things that have been invented or guessed. In a Roman soldier's dressing for battle, "the Belt is not the most noticeable piece of the armour, however, it is actually the central piece that holds all the rest securely in place and provides for every need during battle. The belt was broad and made of sturdy leather. From it hung an overlapping skirt of leather straps which on the inside surface were armored with small rectangular pieces of metal held in place by decorative rivets which showed on the outside. Also from the belt hung specialized hooks and holders on which to secure the scabbard that contained the sword at the proper angle, the quiver which held lances and an apparatus on which to rest the large battle shield. Also, on the belt were clips with which to hold the breastplate in its proper place. Supplies of bread, oil and water were also on the belt." Therefore, speaking the truth without fear or favour, as simple as it may sound, is our foremost weapon of warfare. Jesus said; *If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*" (John 8:31&32; 14:6).

The Breastplate of Righteousness - Righteousness is here described as breastplate in the dressing of a soldier. "The Breastplate was really a work of art. Each breastplate was custom made for the soldier that wore it. Often a casting was made of the man's torso. This negative casting was then used to make a positive of the torso. The positive was overlaid with brass that was beaten to conform to the details of the torso. Breastplates were often made very elaborate with additional decorations and polished to a brilliant mirror finish that was blinding in the sunshine. Despite its beauty, the breastplate was very functional, protecting the heart and other vital organs from penetration through its metal shell." Righteousness broadly has to do with three areas of our personality and these are what we think, say and do. When these three areas are refined by the Spirit of God through His word, then you are righteous. According to Barclay, "when a man is clothed in righteousness he is impregnable. Words are not defense against accusations but a good life. Once a man accused Plato of certain crime. "Well then," said Plato, "we must live in such a way as to prove that his accusations are a lie." The only way to meet the accusations against Christianity is to show how good a Christian can be." We can be righteous because 1John 3:7 says, "*Dear children, don't let anyone deceive you about this: When people do what is right, it is because they are righteous, even as Christ is righteous.*"

The Equipment of the Gospel of Peace - The gospel of Jesus Christ is that of peace and it is to the Christian what sandals, shoes or boots are to a soldier. As the soldier stands on shoes, so the Christian stands on the gospel. "The Shoes or sandals of the Roman soldier were no normal footwear. Great care was taken by Rome to supply the soldiers with appropriate footwear for their assignment. Their shoes (or boots) consisted of an elaborately cut and laced sandal of which the sole was layers of metal and leather with 'hob nail' spikes extending one-half inch, to in some cases 'inches,' from the sole to plant into the ground to keep them from being moved. Some had toe spikes and or built-in spurs with

which to do damage to the enemy. The uppers of the sandals were often armored by small overlapping pieces of metal riveted to the leather straps. In addition, attached to the uppers of the sandal were removable metal greaves that extended up over the kneecap protecting the knees, shins and ankles." "Sandals were the sign of one equipped and ready to move. The sign of the Christian is that he is eager to be on the way to share the gospel with others who have not heard it." The readiness of Christians to zealously preach the gospel everywhere - home, office, school, hospital, prison, Government Councils of all levels, in politics, etc - is indeed a powerful weapon of spiritual warfare.

The Shield of Faith - Faith according to Heb. 11:1 is "*the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*" By faith we touch and handle things that are intangible. "There were actually two types of shields used by Roman soldiers of the day. One, a small (24" x 36" diameter) round one, was for dress parades. The other; was a large (60" x 36") rectangular shield that in Greek was named, "a door," because it looked like the soldier was carrying a full size leather covered door behind which he could safely stand. Each shield was made of six layers of thick animals hide specially tanned and woven together making them as tough and durable as metal yet relatively light weight. The leather shields could be soaked in water before battle so that in the event the enemy would rain fiery projectiles on them, the fire would be extinguished on impact." In consonance with Greenwood, Barclay says, "the word Paul uses is not that for the comparatively small round shield; it is that for the great oblong shield which the heavily armed warrior wore. One of the most dangerous weapons in ancient warfare was the fiery dart. It was a dart tipped with tow dipped in pitch. The pitch-soaked tow was set alight and the dart was thrown. The great oblong shield was made of two sections of wood, glued together. When the shield was presented to the dart, the dart sank into the wood and the flame was put out. Faith can deal with the darts of temptation. With Paul, faith is always complete trust in Christ. When we walk close with Christ, we are safe from temptation."

Faith as a weapon of spiritual warfare can further be compared to the present day patriot missile. "The Patriot missile system has a remarkable goal: It is designed to detect, target and then hit an incoming missile that may be no more than 10 to 20 feet (3 to 6 meters) long and is typically flying at three to five times the speed of sound. The upgraded Patriot system can also destroy incoming aircraft and cruise missiles. Patriot is a long-range, all-altitude, all-weather air defense system to counter tactical ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and advanced aircraft." The Patriot missile systems were deployed by US forces in Israel during Operation Iraqi Freedom in the Iraqi/Kuwait war (mother of all battles); it was also recently deployed to Turkey and Jordan. When the battle is fierce, it is only strong faith in God and His word that will keep the Christian fighting. No wonder Heb. 11:6 added "*it is impossible to please God without faith.*"

The Helmet of Salvation - According to Barclay, "salvation is not something which looks back only. The salvation which is in Christ gives us forgiveness for sins of the past and strength to conquer sin in the days to come." "The helmet was the most noticeable piece of armour. It was often ornate, intricately decorated and plumed with brightly dyed feathers or horsehair. Some parade dress helmets had course horsehair plumes that would extend to the waist. The Roman helmet was designed so that blows from sword, hammer or ax could not pierce it but would be deflected and yet allow the soldier maximum visibility." Salvation removes us from the camp of Satan, delivers us from his powers and translates us into the kingdom of God, thereby enlisting us in God's army. Salvation is very fundamental

for by it, we cease to be strangers to the common wealth of Israel and we gain access to all the mysteries of God. We must first be saved to fight this battle victoriously. John testifies; *"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony ..."* (Rev. 12: 10 & 11).

The Sword of the Spirit (the Word or Rhema of God) – The word of God becomes the sword of the Spirit only when it is proclaimed, hence it is described as the rhema of God. Jesus said, *"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."* (John 6:63). Jesus used the word to conquer Satan by converting it from logos to rhema. When tempted, He repeatedly replied Satan with "it is written" (Matt. 4:1-11). "The word of God is at once our weapon of defence against sin and our weapon of attack against the sins of the world ... We can never win God's battle without God's book." "The sword of a Roman soldier of that day was a feared weapon. Short, lightweight and well balanced, it was quick and deadly. The two razor sharpened edges of the broad blade could easily slice a roast. And, the flared and tapered point was designed to easily penetrate and disembowel the enemy. It was well known that if a Roman soldier ever unsheathed his sword – he would use it." The issue now is how much of the word do we possess to adequately confront the enemy? *"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."* (2 Tim. 2:15 & Heb. 4:12). Just as a Roman soldier without his sword is disarmed, so is a Christian without sufficient knowledge of the word of God.

Praying in the Holy Spirit – Greenwood likened prayer, as a weapon of warfare, to the lances of a Roman soldier. "Roman soldiers carried an assortment of lances. Long and short lances. Lances with single head, dual heads and trident lances. Some were for throwing like spears. Others were for close quarter combat. Each lance had it's function and purpose." Paul calls for all manners of prayers because the efficacy of all other weapons, directly or indirectly, depends on the Christian's prayer life. "Finally, Paul comes to the greatest weapon of all – and that is prayer. We note three things he says about prayer:

- (a) **It must be constant.** Our tendency is so often to pray only in the great crises of life; but it is from daily prayer that the Christian will find daily strength.
- (b) **It must be intense.** Limp prayer never got a man anywhere. Prayer demands the concentration of every faculty upon God.
- (c) **It must be unselfish.** We must learn to pray as much for others and with others as for ourselves.

Christians must awake from slumber to watch and pray so that Satan is not given room to sow weeds among the wheat. *"... but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way ..."* (Matt. 13:24-30). The enemies do not relent and so should the Church. Prov. 6:4&5 says; *"Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids. Deliver thyself as a roe from the hand of the hunter, and as a bird from the hand of the fowler."* This is the need of the moment-prayer.

The Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22&23) – Besides all the armour mentioned above, the Christian character is of utmost importance to this battle. Charisma that is void of character and integrity is nothing but confusion. This is why the need to bear the fruit of

the Spirit is indispensable because it makes Christianity attractive and appealing though difficult. Paul outlines the fruit of the Spirit in Gal. 5:22 & 23; *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."* As we grow in other weapons of our warfare, it is imperative to also develop the fruit of the Spirit to give due credence to our testimony.

PREVAILING OVER THE HORDES OF HELL: The book of Revelation speaks of the final victory over hell; *"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."* (Rev. 20:14). But before this ultimate end, Jesus has promised that *"... upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* (Matt. 16:18). This promise of Christ to the church of victory over the hordes of hell is not to come without struggle. Hence, elsewhere, He said; *"When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils."* (Luke 11:21&22). Now the strong man is Satan; his goods are the souls of men (unbelievers in the captivity of sin and Satan); the stronger than is Jesus Christ and the Christians are His instruments of war. *"You are my battle ax and sword,"* says the Lord. *"With you I will shatter nations and destroy many kingdoms. With you I will shatter armies, destroying the horse and rider, the chariot and charioteer."* (Jer. 51:20&21). Christians have the duty to fight to expand the kingdom of God and this Jesus made clearer when He asked; *"Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? And then he will spoil his house."* (Matt. 12:29).

The assurance, authority and power to fight and conquer have been given but there is a condition. 2 Corinth. 10:6 says; *"And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled."* It is only when we are obedient to the voice of God that the hordes of hell can bow to the Church. We cannot, as a Church and nation, turn our back on God and expect to prevail over the manifestations of principalities and powers of darkness. There is hope for our nation for God says; *If I shut up heaven that there be no rain, or if I command the locusts to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. Now mine eyes shall be open, and mine ears attend unto the prayer that is made in this place."* (2Chron. 7:13-15). Let us, therefore, heed God's call so we can have peace from above and avoid the mistake of ancient Israel by refusing to continue in this vicious circle.

The Church cannot afford to fail God and man in this generation. The activities of Satan is sure to intensify as we approach the Last Day but God has subsequently promised increased out-pouring of His spirit upon the church to meet the need. Let us as a Church put on the whole armour of God that we may overcome in the evil day. And as a nation, let us pursue justice with respect for the sanctity of life and dignity of the human person, and the God of grace will give us victory. However, we must bear in mind that those who overcame did not love even their own self more than God. *"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."* (Rev. 12:11). Jesus says; *"If you try to keep your life for yourself, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will find true life."* (Mark 8:35).

Constitutional Amendment – The process for constitutional amendment has already begun. We hope that in this meeting we shall make some significant progress, so that problematic issues in our constitution or those not covered, or new developments earlier on not envisaged could be adequately covered.

ACNN – The equipment has been supplied and trial transmission has been going on. Please, get a “**Strong Decoder**” for MyTV and you will discover the station. A Committee headed by the Archbishop of Lagos, The Most Rev’d. Prof. Adebayo Akinde, has submitted a blueprint for the development of the station. Already the first batch of lay personnel have been recruited into the following departments – Production, Marketing, Programmes and News. I wish to request all Dioceses to join in the aggressive marketing of the programmes, and to sponsor some. We need a lot of money to stay afloat. The licence alone has an annual renewable bill of – N53m, let alone cost of programmes, staff salaries, maintenance, equipment, etc. We hereby charge Dioceses under leadership of their Provinces to pull their resources together and establish their production centres where quality programmes can be generated to serve ACNN. Find out more on ACNN from the Technical Committee. I wish to add a new member to the technical Committee. He is the Rt. Rev’d. Blessing Enyinda of Ikwere Diocese. Recently during the Conference organized by our communication Department, I discovered that this Bishop has talents which can help to build the project.

GAFCON 2 – From 21st October to the 26th instant, all Bishops, their wives, some clergymen, laity and some selected youth will assemble at Nairobi, for GAFCON 2. We have done a lot to sensitize you on this. Our Church will be represented by 450 delegates. There is need to start preparing earnestly. Some will travel from Lagos, some others from Abuja. Bishop Odubogun’s Committee is COORDINATING. Please ask your questions now, as last minute rush will not be entertained. Primate’s will assemble in Nairobi one week before commencement of Conference. Discussions are being concluded with Kenya and Ethiopian Airways. The cost of participation per delegate is – N500,000 for the one week; this covers **Return Ticket, Registration Fee, Accommodation and Feeding**. Work on processing of visas is on. We thank Dioceses who willingly offered sponsorship to those unable to pay. We need more of such support.

DIVCCON 3 – The third edition of DIVCCON will take place in Abuja from 18th – 22nd November, 2013. The venue is the National Christian Centre. The amount for registration has been revised downward by 50%, and graded as per time of registration – N2,500; N3,000 and N3,500. The theme of this years programme is – “*Go Forward*” (Exodus 14:15).

St. Matthias Day Fund – In 2013, a total of N309,885,114 was gathered from across the country. The following Dioceses did not forward their money to the fund – Calabar, Uyo, Ogoni, Ibadan North, Oyo, Oke-Ogun, Ekiti-Oke, Kano, Sokoto, Wusasa, Gusau, Mbaise, Egbu, Benin, Western-Izon, Udi, Makurdi, Minna, Asaba, Enugu North, etc.

As in the past, Lagos West Diocese came top. Abuja, Niger Delta North, Lagos, on the Niger, Warri, Awka, Lagos Mainland and Eyo were remarkably consistent in mobilizing of the people of God to support the programme. Notable increase was also observed in the following Dioceses – Ohaji/Egbema, Ika, Jos, Bauchi, Pankshin, Kubwa and Kwoi.

On 21st May, 2013, the Archbishops assembled to apportion the Fund. To encourage accountability, it was agreed that beneficiaries must have met their CON assessment obligation before cheques can be released to them; and secondly, that a detailed account of how previous benefits were applied be forwarded to the Primate’s Office without which defaulting beneficiaries will no longer be considered eligible. Those who have not sent in their money have the moral burden on their neck, to remove it or keep on wearing it.

Church of Nigeria Publications and Outstanding Huge Debts:

- i) Church Year Calendar
- ii) Daily Devotional (The Fountain)
- iii) Children Sunday School Manuals
- iv) Assessments (See details in the Treasurer's Report).

Ph.D Scholarship Scheme – Ten clergymen are already benefiting from this scheme; their academic progress reports should be forwarded to the Office of the General Secretary. Any unserious candidate may be dropped, as the scholarship covers a definite period only. New candidates are welcome.

Higher Education – The Church is making frantic efforts to adequately compliment the Government in the provision of quality education at all levels. Part of efforts made in this regard is the establishment and proposal of new Universities as shown below:

- i) Ajayi Crowther University in Oyo established in 2005.
- ii) Paul University in Awka established in 2010.
- iii) Proposed University by Kubwa Diocese.

The Anglican Communion had always played the pioneering role in the Education Sector because of the conviction of the Church fathers that the spread of the gospel light and acquisition of knowledge are inseparable. It is against this backdrop that the two Universities have been established with the vision of bringing more on board but unfortunately, funding has been a serious challenge. Being mission-owned educational institutions, fees being paid by students are grossly inadequate to meet the huge cost of providing the basic infrastructural facilities such as: hostels, laboratories, libraries, lecture rooms, theatres, office complex and water supply.

Our Church is not relenting in sourcing funds as all available options are being considered, although without exploiting the students. This is why we have thought it expedient to make this passionate appeal to all to support the vision of the church through sacrificial donations and our Diocese and members to live up to their responsibilities.

Church of Nigeria Camp Land in Abuja – There is a portion of land discovered in Kwali, FCT, but due to some bureaucratic bottlenecks, we have not been able to obtain the required papers to enable us take possession. We have need for such facilities in Abuja to enable Anglicans hold retreats and other programmes conveniently. We implore Mr. President to use his good office to assist the Church to acquire the said land.

Bishop's Training – We thank the coordinator of this programme, the Rt. Rev'd Ken and Dr. Mrs. Ngozi Okeke, for their efforts. After an in-depth analysis of the programme, we agreed to shift emphasis from initial training requirements for young bishops to Bishops' Refresher Courses, usually of one week duration. Details of the first set will be out soon.

Senior Clergy Advanced Training – We continue to show gratitude to Bishops Samuel Sowale, David Bello, Kelechi Eze, Jonah G. Kolo, Blessing Enyinda, and Marcus Yahaya who have made immense sacrifice to ensure that this programme continues to receive participants from all Dioceses. We appeal to all Dioceses to ensure that their

allocations are always filled. It has served to reduce the gap between the Bishops and the Clergy.

Permanent Diaconate - During the last Bishops' Retreat, this topic was hotly debated. Since then instead of dying away, it has surged forward with more vigour, with calls from respectable men and women of our Church for women ordination. Our last democratic exercise on this subject was in 2006 at St. Christopher, Kaduna. The permanent diaconate is however not exactly as women ordination, but a deliberate step to recognize the spiritual gifts which abound in the people of God. The Bishop Theologian's Committee has compiled a set of rules which can serve as safeguard if accepted. In most cases the fear is not the desirability, but the ample possibility of abuse. This fear is real. But should we throw away the baby and the bathwater?

New Vehicles for Ibru (Anglican) Centre - After the Episcopal Synod held at the centre last May, some Dioceses had a meeting with the Primate, identified the need to improve the transport means at the Centre. They are Lagos, Lagos Mainland, Lagos West, Abuja, Ibadan, Niger Delta North, Awka, On the Niger, Nnewi, Aguata and Evo. In that short meeting, the sum of N13.5m was raised. We have now purchased two vehicles - a Toyota Hiace bus and a Corolla car. We thank all donors, and pray that God may bless your efforts.

CNMS - The CNMS is doing a great job on behalf of all of us, particularly at the international level. A great effort is being made with results in the West African sub-region, in Togo, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Benin Republic, Chad, etc. We commend the Diocese on the Niger for their evangelical vision. The CNMS has also visited some parts of Europe. They have received invitation from South Americans for affiliation and leadership. They need more money to be able to represent us well. Donate to support the efforts of CNMS.

Anglican Youth Fellowship (A.Y.F) - A large turn-out was recorded at the AYF annual Bible Study Conference, hosted by the Diocese of Otukpo, on the theme "Redeeming the Time". We are reassured that our Church actually has a youth following. About ten thousand participants took part. We commend the Bishop in charge of the Youth Work, The Rt. Rev'd Jolly E. Oyekpen, Bishop of Akoko-Edo Diocese, for a job well done. We also commend the new AYF leadership for their determination to succeed. I have invited them for a discussion on the way forward. Up till now, those protesting the 40 year age limit and have formed a parallel organization have refused to comply with a simple instruction of forwarding their proposed constitution, detail write-up to this body for vetting and approval. So for now they are not recognized by the church of Nigeria.

Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion (E.F.A.C.) - EFAC Convention was held this year in the Diocese of Gwagwalada. It started as usual with the Clergy and Wives Retreat, before the full-blown convention. The Rt. Rev'd. Henry Okeke is the National Chairman. The Convention offered opportunity for soul-searching messages, aimed at self-examination. The theme was "Be ye steadfast." We commend the Diocese of Gwagwalada for all responsibilities taken.

Other Departments - The Ecumenism, Politics and Justice, Peace and Equity Departments held very important National seminars to look at their contributions in the overall life of the Church. We commend their dedication to duty. The Children Ministry

also held an annual programme at Onitsha to train the trainers. We are grateful to the diocese on the Niger for this responsibility taken.

Chancellors'/Registrars'/Legal Officers' Annual Conference - This conference was held in Abuja and succeeded more in bridging the gap between the lay leadership and the Episcopacy. They learn more of what the church expects from them, and save the diocese from factionalization and polarization. What we envisage is a Diocese where everyone performs his due share of responsibilities for the overall well being of the church.

Our Wives - The women have refused to be left behind. They have now instituted Clergy Wives Training of one week duration to discuss Parish life and work from their own perspective. The second edition was held at our Retreat Centre, Agbarha-Otor, in August. We commend their initiative.

UK Chaplaincy - The process of acquiring property is much more cumbersome in the UK, than in Nigeria. However the Committee will in five minutes tell us how close we are to our desired objective of owning our own property.

All African Conference of Churches - This conference was held recently in Uganda. Archbishop Edmond Akanya represented our Church along with other delegates. In the conference one of our delegates, Barr. Chinelo Anazodo, was elected Vice-Chair for the West African Sub-region. We congratulate her.

CANA - The Primate and a team of Archbishops visited our Churches in CANA. We addressed CANA clergy in Virginia, visited a quarreling, highly factionalized Nigerian group in Maryland. We were also invited to speak at Washington DC on the Nigerian situation, with emphasis on insecurity and Boko Haram, by the Department of West African Affairs. We had a very significant meeting and accord with Archbishop Duncan, the Primate of CANA at Pittsburgh. Our presence in San Francisco Area is very weak. We visited Bishop Felix Orji at El-Passo, Texas State. The congregation is a beautiful blend of white and coloured. After assessing the situation at Miami, Florida, we returned home. Bishop Fagbamiye flew a long distance to join others to receive us. Bishop Julian Dobbs showed a high sense of responsibility, and accompanied us all the way to Pittsburg, and only returned to Virginia after completing the assignment at San-Francisco. Even then he still kept in touch on phone. The Rt. Rev'd Felix Orji's Diocese is mixed and stable. We made it clear that the church of Nigeria is not in a hurry to abandon CANA.

A New Archbishop of Canterbury - With the retirement of the Most Rev'd and Rt. Hon. Rowan Williams, a new one in person of the Most Rev'd. and Rt. Hon. Justin Welby is now in charge at Canterbury. At the moment with the emphasis being given to issues of human sexuality by the Western World and their Churches, God only can revive the communion from its comatose health condition.

Global South - The same virus afflicting the communion has spread to the Global South, with countries struggling in a suffocating moral situation to find a breath of fresh air. However, we are still there hoping that in our next meeting, a frank talk will show where individual Churches lean.

CAPA – Even here the same virus is at work to explain the absence of vitality. The Primates’ meeting was to hold in Nigeria last April, but it was postponed, may be to next April. Unwholesome intrusion from TEC and Canterbury has terribly diminished the organization. Since the election overwhelmed by TEC in Burundi, things have not been the same again, with CAPA.

Condolences – We, on behalf of the Standing Committee, wish to express our heartfelt condolences to these our bereaved members: the Bishop of Aba, Rt. Rev’d. Christian C. Ugwuozor, who lost the wife, Bishop of Ogbomosho, Rt. Rev’d. Matthew Osunade, who lost the wife; Bishop of Oke-Ogun, Rt. Rev. Solomon Amusan, who lost the father; Bishop of Awka, Rt. Rev’d. Alex Chibuzo Ibezim, who lost the mother; Bishop of Ife-East, Rt. Rev’d. Oluseyi Oyelade, who lost the father; the Chairman of the Laity Council, Hon. Justice B. O. Ogunade, who lost the wife; and Ven. Prof. Ben. Chuks Okeke who lost the wife. We equally want to extend our condolences to all families affected by the Boko Haram insurgence especially in Kano, Maiduguri, Adamawa, and the Dioceses of Jalingo and Kafanchan. We pray God, in the power of His Holy Spirit, to console all these mentioned and others not mentioned, with His heavenly consolations and grant you the fortitude to bear the irreparable loss. We equally pray for the Governor of Taraba State, Governor Danbaba Danfulani Suntai, for quick recovery.

Gratitude – We want to sincerely express our gratitude to the retired Bishop of Lokoja diocese, the Rt. Rev’d. George Bako, for his consistence in offering copies of the annual Diary to all our Bishops, both serving and retired, and to some Clergy. It is our prayer that God will replenish his resources and grant him good life at old age.

General Conclusion – In this Standing Committee, a lot of financial, material and human resources have been committed; for this we are very grateful. We appeal to all delegates – Bishops, Clergy and Lay – to be part and parcel of every discussion to ensure we fulfill our mission in Bayelsa State. We need to put on the whole armour of God in order to counter the abundant negative tendencies, influences, manifestations and organizations that are really dragging us out of our destined orbit. These forces may be visible or invisible, human or spiritual, etc; whatever they may be, the power of the Lord, Jesus Christ, is more than able to conquer them. Truly, in Him, we are more than conquerors, we are winners and overcomers. This is my prayer for this Standing Committee, for our church and for our nation Nigeria.

APPENDIX II

A PASTORAL LETTER FROM THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) MEETING AT OUR SAVIOUR'S CHURCH, G.R.A. BENIN CITY, EDO STATE, FEBRUARY 5-9, 2013

My dear people of God,

It is with great joy we write you again after our last Pastoral Letter from Ado Ekiti in September 2012. Since then we have had some developments within the life and ministry of our Church.

We held a meeting of the Church of Nigeria Standing Committee in the Diocese of Benin from 5th to 9th February, 2013, and we were privileged to discuss a number of issues of great importance to the Church of God. The theme of the meeting "Overcoming the Challenge of our Time", afforded us the opportunity to examine at least four types of persecution that Christians may suffer in our time;

- ↳ Government Persecution
- ↳ Economic Persecution
- ↳ Religious Persecution (including persecution from within the church) and
- ↳ Physical Persecution.

Whichever type you are experiencing now, we urge you not to fear. Our FAITH works! Remember what the Lord Jesus Christ told his disciples in Matthew 10:28 about who we should fear, "him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell".

Beloved, in these trying times, we are called upon to determine not to be intimidated, because intimidation is a weapon of Satan. We call to mind those who have suffered persecution, including Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna of blessed memory, others like Thomas Cranmer, Latimer, Ridley, Bradford, and those of our brethren who have recently been martyred in parts of northern Nigeria by the Boko Haram terrorists. In all and through all, please stand firm and know that God is "our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear" (Psalm 46:1,2) Like the Smyrna Christians, let us cast off fear, rebuff intimidation, and bravely and courageously stand to be counted for Jesus, especially in times like these.

We have noted with deep joy and do hereby appreciate your great and collective effort in making the Saint Matthias' Fund collection in 2012 the huge success it was. We have applied the money to areas of critical need in some Dioceses of our Church, and call on you to remember the third edition of this intervention Fund, which comes up on 24th February, 2013. We ask that you mobilize and give more generously,.

We have also observed with great pain the unacceptable situation of heavy indebtedness of some Dioceses to their clergy. A number of Dioceses have not been able to pay their clergy entitlements, and this has brought enormous hardship on them and their families. We are taking urgent steps as a Church to get into this problem with a view to providing realistic and lasting solutions, including, if necessary, some drastic measures.

In addition, there is the problem of non-patronage of devotionals produced by our Church: The Daily Fountain, Bible Study and Children's Sunday School materials. We urge you to

change your attitude and patronize these publications, and equally make prompt payments for what you buy.

We are pleased to report the progress in the project **CANOC CABLE NETWORK TV**, for which we gratefully thank the donor of N250,000,000 to our Church. God willing, we hope to commission the project before June 2013. Please pray for the donor, his family, and the business from which the money has come.

The first and second editions of DIVCCON have been adjudged successful. However, we have been blessed with several critical appraisals of the programme. These benefits will be incorporated into the third edition, by way of improvement. The third edition will hold 18th - 22nd November 2013. Efforts are being made in search of an alternative venue. The organizing committees and sub-committees are being reorganized for better delivery. Please start now to sensitize your Diocese. We will appreciate a larger turn out of the laity, and the youth.

In the same vein, GAFCON 2 will hold this year in Nairobi, Kenya from 20th - 26th October 2013, and as many as 450 delegates may attend from our Church. We call on you all to assist your Dioceses to make adequate and necessary financial preparation toward this.

As you are probably aware, a new Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Rev'd. and Rt. Hon. Justin Welby has been appointed and will be enthroned on 21st March 2013 at Canterbury Cathedral, Canterbury, UK. Although we do not yet know the priorities of this new Archbishop, we call for your prayers for him to be a leader who will in our time stand up against revisionist forces and defend "the faith that was once for all delivered to the Saints".

Sadly, we hereby report the death (14th December 2012) and burial of a former Primate, the Most Reverend Joseph Abiodun Adetiloye (1988 - 1998) at Odo-Owa, Ekiti state on 25 January 2013. As the Governor of Ekiti testified of him, "He lived well, he served well, and he died well!"

We commend to you for prayers the newly appointed Dean of our Church, The Most Rev. Ignatius Kattay, Archbishop of the Niger Delta Province and the new Archbishops of the Ecclesiastical Provinces of Kebbi, Jos, Lagos, Owerri and Ibadan.

Finally, we remind you from the Scripture that in times like these you need a Saviour, the Bible, and Anchor - the Solid rock, Jesus the Christ. With your life Anchored on the Rock, you will stand and remain secure in the midst of all the challenges of our time. Remember, nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Indeed "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us" (Romans 8:37). *Surely, we shall overcome and evil will be defeated; goodness will defeat evil; love will conquer hatred; reconciliation will conquer division, forgiveness will conquer bitterness. The spirit of peace will conquer the evil spirit of killing, maiming, looting, robbery, kidnapping and selling of fellow human beings for personal enrichment. In spite of the social, political and economic tsunamis of the moment, Nigeria, shall abide; the Church of God marches on, "for God is in the midst of her."* (Ps. 46:5).

May the Peace of God rest upon you all. Amen!

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

APPENDIX III

COMMUNIQUE FROM THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) HELD FROM 5-9 FEBRUARY, 2013 AT OUR SAVIOUR'S CHURCH, G.R.A. BENIN EDO STATE

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 Women and Girls' Organisations, met at Our Saviour's Church, G.R.A., Benin City from February 5 - 9, 2013. One hundred and thirty five bishops, one hundred and forty eight clergymen and eighty members of the house of laity were present.

Goodwill messages were received from His Excellency Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan GCFR, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, represented by His Excellency, Comrade Adams Oshiomole, Governor of Edo State; the Most Revd. Peter J. Akinola, retired Primate of the Church of Nigeria, the Honourable Justice C. O. Idahosa, the Chief Judge of Edo State; the Oba of Benin Kingdom; Brigdier General Dr. B. O. Aisien, KSC, the President General of the Joint Council of Knights and Chief Gabriel Igbinedion, Esama of Benin. The Most Rev'd. Friday Imaekhai, Archbishop of Bendel Province and the Rt. Rev'd. Peter Imasuen; Bishop of the diocese of Benin welcomed the delegates.

The theme of the meeting was "Overcoming the Challenges of the Time." At the conclusion, the Standing Committee issued this Communiqué:

2. *Overcoming the Challenges of our Times"*

Throughout the history of Christianity, the Church has encountered many challenges against her historic faith. She has suffered persecution and is being attacked by those who are in opposition to the Good News of Christ. These circumstances have provided Christians with the choice to remain faithful to Christ 'no matter the cost'.

The Standing Committee is very much aware of the global challenges of secularism and relativism that are also very present in Nigeria. We know well that the struggle between good and evil will only intensify, but the Church will never surrender to these growing pressures.

Jesus Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the 'First and the Last'. He knows our past; He is with us in the present and has gone ahead to the future. As the pre-existent one, the eternal God, who creates and orders the course of history, who rules in the affairs of human beings; He is the Champion of the Christians at Smyrna. Therefore, we shall overcome.

In particular, we shall overcome the continued terror attack and kidnapping going on against innocent Christians and their churches and Nigerians in general. We shall overcome the widespread corruption across our Nation. We shall overcome the social malaise of unemployment and general poverty in the country. We shall overcome many hiccups in our party politics. We shall overcome the surging assault on biblical marriage from the

western world and their allies and we shall overcome the spiritual attacks from the enemy of our souls. “Certainly, in all these things, we are more than conquerors”

3. Concerns about National Security

The Church commends the security agencies for improvement in the security situation in the country. We, however, advise that government should take precaution approach over the call for negotiation with the Boko Haram terrorists group. One would have loved to see a situation where ceasefire and renunciation of their goal of Islamizing Nigeria by force, precede any form of negotiation. We observe also the continuing silent killings of Christians in their homes, continued kidnappings and the incessant Fulani-Indigene clashes across the country. Clearly, to continue to encourage nomadic method of animal husbandry can only worsen the security situation.

4. Police Pension Funds Scam Trial

The Standing Committee condemns in the strongest of terms, the incessant breach of trust by people entrusted with public funds. It notes with great concerns the unhappy reactions of Nigerians over the outcome of the recent Police Pension Fund scam trial where the culprit escaped with punishment that is certainly not commensurate with the offence he committed. To this end, the Standing Committee calls on the National Assembly to take immediate steps to repeal the section of the EFCC Act , which provides for plea-bargaining, so that looters can receive full punishment for their crimes. Hopefully this will act as a deterrent to future looters.

5. Concern and Care for Flood Victims

The Church commends the Federal Government on its response to the victims of the recent major flood disaster and pleads that strict measures be applied to ensure that relief materials get to the actual victims. Also, the Church appeals to the victims as well as all those considered to be vulnerable, living along rivers and rivulets, to heed the wise counsel of government and where necessary to relocate. The Standing Committee calls for proactive efforts on the a part of government to prevent future catastrophes.

6. Renewed Commitment for Political Engagement

During these times of challenge the Standing Committee calls on all Anglicans and Christians in general in Nigeria, to actively participate in party politics at all levels. It is in this way, the Gospel imperatives will be brought to bear upon our national life in order to eradicate the numerous political and economic ills afflicting the country. “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s and to God the things that are God’s”

7. Concern for Marriage and Family

The Standing Committee reaffirms its commitment to the Biblical standard for marriage as between one man and one woman in a monogamous, life long union. The Church calls on all its members to reject the ploy of the revisionists who are trying to replace this biblical standard with their own ever-changing creations. We believe that the re-definition of marriage, both in theory and practice to accommodate same-sex marriage is unwarranted.

Staying true to the biblical standard will ensure stability in our family units and give a renewed hope to our children.

8. *Conclusion*

As we confront these challenging times, we do so in the sure confidence that we are not alone. Therefore, we shall overcome. "... we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses and so we should lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely and run with endurance that race that is set before us looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."

The Most Rev'd. Nicholas D. Okoh
Primate of All Nigeria.