

SYNOD PRAYER

Eternal and Most Merciful God, The Creator and Preserver of all life, we thy unworthy servants bring You all honor, praise, glory and adoration, on behalf of our dear Diocese, through our only Lord and Advocate, even Jesus The Christ.

We appreciate, and never take for granted, Your gracious love which has shielded us from all the perils and dangers of the time, and granted us the privilege to gather again in Your Name. We pray that Your Spirit abides with us all through this synod. Bless and continue to inspire our Bishop, and the entire leadership of our Diocese. May all who worship You here be clothed with righteousness. May we be so convicted by the truth of, and the hope in, Your word, that we shall be ready to die defending same. May the light of Your word continue to lighten the thick darkness of the present time, that Your people shall be free and the whole earth live to praise Your holy Name. Grant these, we pray, through Him who alone is The Way, The Truth, and The life, Jesus The Christ our Lord. Amen.

EKPERE SỊNỌD

Chineke nke ebighi ebi, Onye obi ebere, Onye okike na Onye n'echekwa ndu nile. Ayi bu ndi oru Gi n'ezughị oke, na-ewetara Gi ugwu nile, otuto, mbuli elu na nkwanye-ugwu n'aha Dayosis ayi, site na Onyenweanyi na onye n'ekwuru ayi, Jisos bu Kraist.

Ayi n'ekele gi n'ihị amara ihunanya gi nke chekwara ayi puo n'ihe egwu na mkpagbu nke oge a, bu ihe ayi na-akpoghi ihe efu. I mere ayi ohere-oma izukota n'aha Gi. Ayi n'arịo ka mmuo Gi nonyere ayi n'oge Sinođ a. Gozie ma gaakwa n'iru iwuli Bishop ayi na ndi ndu nile nke Dayosis ayi. Ka mmadu nile ndi n'efe Gi na ebe a yiri ezi omume dika uwe. Ka eziokwu na olileanya nke okwu Gi, metu ayi n'obi, ruekwa na ayi ga-adi njikere inwu dika ndi agha nke okwukwe. Ka ihe nke okwu Gi nwue, gaa n'iru wezuga ochichiri nke oge a. Ka umu Gi nwere onwe ha, ka mmadu nile bi n'awa too aha Gi di nsọ.

Mere ayi ihe ndia, ayi rioro site n'Onye nani Ya bu uzọ, eziokwu na ndu, Jisos bu Kraist Onyenwe ayi. Amin.

The Archbishops And Bishops,

Political leaders,

Diocesan officials,

Council of Knights and Ladies,

Bishop's Nominees,

Traditional rulers,
Distinguished Guests,
Synod delegates,
Men and women in uniform,
Our Brigade,
Members of the Press and Media,
Beloved Children of God,

Greetings. It is to the glory of God, and with a heart and every sense of humility and responsibility that we welcome you to this 3rd session of our Diocesan 5th synod holding here at Okpu Umuobo ancient kingdom. As we must know and appreciate, this convocation is an open demonstration of the love, grace and favor of our Almighty God and Father, the owner and preserver of all life. But this particular gathering is an added layer of such benevolence in light of the present challenges of the present time. Therefore on your behalf, we say to our God and Father, the creator and preserver of all life, be all glory, praise, adoration, honor and majesty, now and forever. Amen.

Appreciation.

We sincerely appreciate our immediate constituency, the clergy and entire workforce of this Diocese, and their wives and families, for their commitment to duty and willingness to follow through thick and thin. We express our thanks to the entire faithful of our Diocese for your commitment and support to our mission and ministry. As you well know, we are just beginning a new era of enjoyment. And the joy and glory of the later will sure surpass those of the former.

For the success of this synod, we heartily appreciate our Clerical Synod Secretary, The Rev'd Canon Udochukwu Ephraim Ahaghotu PhD, and the silent achieving Chairman of our Central Planning Committee, Sir Okechukwu Nwachukwu PhD. With the planning committee, they have done exceptionally well to God's glory and we bless them. Ngwa Central Archdeaconry has done very well, and so we applaud the efforts of the Archdeacon, the Ven. Christopher Nlewemchi Ibe and his wife and Vice President, Evangelist (Mrs) Precious Ibe, and entire workforce of the archdeaconry. Sir Young Nwokocha who leads the Local Organizing Committee, with his team has done well, and so they all share in our blessings. We equally bless all members of this archdeaconry and friends who in any way contributed to this successful outing.

We appreciate the labors of the rest of the synod secretariat, my able Lieutenants - our Secretary and office staff, the Canon to the Ordinary and chaplain for their willingness and faithfulness. May you ever remain under the favor of the Almighty.

At this point it's right and proper to acknowledge and appreciate the human source of my inner strength, my family with Bobby, Minda, and The Chap, physically represented by the baby of the house, my darling.

Please join me to welcome and appreciate my favor, the President of our Women Ministry, Mama Aba Ngwa North, Princess (Mrs.) Odionyenfe Nworoni Chinenye Kanu.

To everyone, we pray and believe that your involvement in this synod will be for you a memorial of unending joy and godly enjoyment to the glory of God.

OUR SYNOD VENUE

ST. AUGUSTINE'S CHURCH OKPU UMUOBO (1916)

The same evangelical wave that hit Ngwa land did not leave Okpu Umuobo untouched. In 1916, the gospel was preached in Okpu-Umuobo by the Opobo Oil Traders. Two Churches started by Opobo Oil Traders and Oil Traders from Abayi Waterside respectively, were sited: one in Achiaru Square in Okpu-Umuobo and the other at Okpu Square, Umuadile in Umuara Village. The Igbu Ekwensu —the destruction of idols, in the whole of Ngwa land in 1916, positively affected Okpu-Umuobo. Many natives were converted into the church.

The Church at Okpu attracted converts from nearby villages such as Umuara, Amuzu, Amaekpu, Uratta and Mgboko Umuette, while the Church at Achiaru welcomed people from Amaufuru, (Umugwo and Umunwajere), Umuohoku, Uratta, Amaekpu, Amuzu and Umuaba villages. Its pioneer members included George Abuwa, Timothy Onwukwe, Joseph Nwanguma, Ebenezer Udogu, Ezekiel Ihemekwa, Willaim Ahunanya Ukaegbu, Nwokocha Alioha, Matthew Onwukwe Aliga, Matthew Ahuaza, Jackson Odoemela, Johnson Aso, David Otti, Edwin Isiguzo, Mark Ikpeazu, Frank Nwadighiogu, Jonah Ahuchogu, Fredrick Nwangwa, Enoch Izima, Reuben Nga, Jane Ovuaka, Evangelist Onwukwe, Nwankpa Erasmus and others. In 1919 the two Churches produced candidates who were baptized by Rev'd A. Ockiya, a native of Nembe in Brass. Those who took part in the first baptism were David Otti, Stephen Uruakpa, Frank Nwosu, Zebulun Ndiotu, Jane Ahaoma, Jackson Odoemela, Robert Omenihu, Sampson Omenihu, Johnson Owunna and others. The text for the sermon was Judges 11 verse 35.

These Churches in the Villages were protected and supported by such recognized Chiefs as Chigbu of Umuadile and Nwangwa Atulegwu of Umuobo. They saw about the prompt payment of Teacher's Salaries, their housing and feeding, building of Churches and School. In those days, the priest in-charge, Rev'd A. Ockiya lived at Azumini. But later a house known as Libreville Mansion was secured for him at Umungasi by the Niger Delta Pastorate Church.

The Church's School at Okpu Umuobo read up to Standard four, after which admissions were sought at Abayi Umuocham and St. Michael's Cathedral Aba respectively. The first Missionary Clerk was Silas Epelle.

In 1922, there was a move to unite the two Churches at Okpu and Umuobo. The two Church teachers then S.G Gambo (1921-1922) and F.S. Finebone made much effort to achieve this. The two congregations agreed to form a combine worship. Matins and Evensong on certain Sundays were alternated between the two churches.

However, the arrangement came to an abrupt halt when Rev. A.O. Ockiya scheduled a baptismal celebration and service at Okpu. On his arrival he found neither candidates nor

worshippers. The news went immediately to Umuobo and the congregation that had gone for worship then returned back to join the baptism ceremony.

This brought misunderstanding between the Agent L.C Brown and Rev'd A. Ockiya. As a result Mr. Brown introduced a new church denomination, the Christ Army Church to replace NDP Okpu. The converts under the leadership of David Otti sent a delegation to Bonny in the company of Reuben Nga, Izuma Nwankerendu, and Ezekiel Ihemekwa to ascertain the validity of the new movement. The report of the delegation did not favour his adherents from UmuNwankwogwu. The crises notwithstanding the church at Okpu continued under the leadership of Matthew Aliga and David Otti with Mark Ikpeazu as his assistant.

P.C. Obi was sent to Okpu as the new Church teacher. Since the Church at Umuobo was not affected by the crises, the two churches amalgamated at Achiaru with co-operative leadership of P.C. Obi and J.J. Epelle. The amalgamation took place in 1926 in a Church Service in which George Abuwa preached. Rev'd A.O. Ockiya christened the Church St. Augustine's Okpu Umuobo.

Then the first solid Church of mud blocks also used for school was built and Bishop Gelstope laid its foundation in 1936. The present Church was built between 1958 and 1966; and its foundation was laid by Bishop R.M. Bara Hart on 17th May 1963. The steady progress of St. Augustine's was dependent on the caliber of staff sent to it and the patronage of people especially the elders of Uratta who donated ample land for the development of the Church and the School. St. Augustine's Okpu-Umuobo became a Parish in 1975 out of Abayi Umuocham and its first Parish Priest was Rev'd A.N Uche. It continued to enjoy the patronage of Eze Alozie and the ecclesiastical patronage of Bishop A. O. Iwuagwu who made it in 1997, the headquarters of Ngwa Central Archdeaconry. It hosted the synod of Aba Diocese in 2000. Its Church and school had produced eminent persons such as Rev'd Nwankerendu, Rev'd Canon Magnus Adiele, Ven. Temple Odoemela, Sir. GAY Odoemela, Mr. Aliga, Cecillia Nwosu, Johnson Asa, Matthew Ahuaza, HRM Eze S. O. Alozie, HRM Eze Christian Iheme, HRH Eze (Dr.) Promise Abuwa, HRH Eze O. Onwukwe, Rt. Rev'd (Dr.) Owen Azubuike, Rev'd Nwankerendu Jnr, J. W Ahuchogu, Ven. Emmanuel E. Egbulefu Ph.D., Apollos Akwarandu, Jackson Alozie, Rev'd Ngozi Onwuchekwa, Rev'd Augustine Isiguzo, John Iheghara, M.O. Ahunanya Nwaadighogu, Joseph A.Anumadu, Ezekiel C. Nwankpa and Dinna Agharanya.

Many Priests have served the church and available record shows the following:

- Ven. A. C. Nwaigwe (Late)
- Ven. Andrew Osondu (Late)
- Ven. Paul Ohame (Late)
- Rev. Temple O. Nwogu (Now Bishop)
- Rev'd Timothy Nwaneme (Late)
- Ven. S. O. Njoku (Late)
- Ven. A. C. Dede
- Ven. S. O. Onyenso
- Ven. E. C. Amadi
- Rev'd Clement Ekeke
- Rev'd Francis Umuegwauagu

- Rev'd Anele Odu
- Rev'd Samuel Wilson
- Rev'd Bethel Nwaogu(Late)
- Rev'd (Barr.) Chris Orisakwe
- Ven. Christopher Denkoro (Late)
- Rev'd Japhet Ohajuru
- Rev'd Hart O. Hart
- Rev'd Canon E. M. E Ohuocha - Supervisor
- Rev'd C. F. K. Chukwuemeka

Currently serving are Ven. Christopher Ibe - Archdeacon and Rev'd Morgan Okezie.

The synod and entire Diocese are grateful to God for sustaining and prospering the labor of these His saints triumphant and militant. We will remain ever appreciative of the sacrifice of these soldiers of Christ, praying that they and their families continue to dwell under the protective shadow of the Most High God. Amen.

RESOURCE PERSONS

Our Synod Preacher

RT. REV. STEVEN K AKOBE. PhD

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Steven Kayode Akobe was born in the tin Mining city of Jos, the capital of Plateau State, some 53 years ago. He is the first Male child of his parents who are devoted Anglicans (though father now diseased). Young Steven as an Anglican tradition as well as a child of proud Anglican parents attended St. Paul's (Anglican) township school Jos for his primary school education from 1975 – 1980. Due to the desire of his parents that their first male child must further his secondary school education, they both sacrificed dearly to send him to the prestigious Baptist high School Jos where he completed his secondary school education and wrote his West African Examination Council Examination in 1985.

His search for higher Education took him to Kwara State College of technology (Now Kwara State Polytechnic) for his IJMB .It was also at this college that he fully committed his life to the Lord Jesus Christ as his Lord and personal savior.

In the year 1988 he gained admission into the faculty of environmental studies, department of Geography and Planning, university of Jos to study Geography and elements of planning. He graduated in 1991 and went on to serve in the NYSC programme the same year.

The definite call into the ordained ministry was received during his NYSC year and he fully obeyed after he had enrolled for his Master's degree in the same university. He started his theological training at the Christian Institute Jos where he obtained a certificate in theology in 1991, and finally completed his Masters of Divinity (MDIV) at the theological college of northern Nigeria, Bukuru Jos (TCNN) in the year 2010. The Rt. Rev. Dr.S. K. Akobe also holds a Post – graduate diploma in education from the Ado Bayero University Kano and a doctor of Philosophy in Theology (PhD) from the Crowther Graduate Seminary Igbihin Abeokuta, Ogun State.

ORDINATION

The Rt. Rev. Dr.S. K. Akobe was made a deacon on the 3rd July of 1994 by the Most Rev. Dr.B. A. Kwashi at the Cathedral Church of St. Luke Jos and Priested on the 18th of December of the same year and at the same venue by the same Bishop

He then moved to Kano Diocese having served five years in Jos Diocese and about one month in Lafia Diocese. He was preferred statutory Canon by the Rt. Rev. Z. L Nyam, bishop of Kano in May 2001 and preferred Archdeacon by the same Bishop in 2006. He was elected Bishop of Kabba on the 31st of July 2010 and duly consecrated on the 12th of September 2010 at the Cathedral Church of St. Peter, Asaba.

POSTING.

1. Cathedral Church of St. Luke, Jos – Curate, 1994 – 1995
2. Mt. Zion Anglican Church, Mararaba ,Nasarawa– Vicar, 1995 – 1997.
3. St. Paul's Anglican Church, Nasarawa – Parish Parist, 1997 – 1999.
4. Cathedral Church of Holy Trinity, Kano – Curate, 1999 – 2001.
5. Cathedral Church of Holy Trinity, Kano – Canon Residentiary, 2001 – 2003
6. St. George's Anglican Church, Kano – Vicar/Archdeacon, 2003 – 2010.
7. Cathedral Church of Holy Trinity, Kano – Vicar/Archdeacon, 2010

Rt. Rev. Dr. S. K. Akobe is married to his amiable wife, Deborah Abiodun and blessed with Tobi, Tomide and Toyosi. Bishop Akobe has written a couple of books -"How do I get to heaven", "Spiritual Reflections and Meditations "and "Spiritual discipline (Lecto Divina)."The Bishop is a singer and lover of music.

My lord Steve has been our Bible Study facilitator at this synod and will preach at the thanksgiving service tomorrow. He is here with his dear wife, and the entire Diocese is glad to have them, praying that God may continue to use them to bless this synod and Diocese, in particular, and His wider Church. My lord and Mama, unu abiala? Ya mara unu nma o.

OTHER PREACHERS & RESOURCE PERSONS

THE REVD. PAULINUS C NWAORGU

The Rev. Paulinus Chiemela Nwaorgu was born in the family of Sir/ Lady Prince Godwin Nwaorgu in Asa-amoka, Asa-amator Osisioma Ngwa L.G. A., of Abia State. He is the 4th Child of the family and second Son.

He attended Asa-amator Primary School, Community Secondary School Egberu Ndoki, studied Geography and Planning at Abia State University Uturu, Diploma in Theology from Trinity Theological College Umuahia, Master in Divinity (M.Div) from Crowther Theological Institute and he is currently pursuing his Doctorate degree from same institution.

Rev. Paulinus C Nwaorgu is currently serving as the Vicar of St Silas Anglican Church Ayaba-Umueze as well as the Supervisor of Ngwa Archdeaconry.

He is married to Evang Mrs Chinasa Paulinus Nwaorgu and the marriage is blessed with a lovely baby miss PraiseGod Chukwumaraihekarinmadu. He preached at the opening service on Thursday.

The REVD CANON EZE O. EGESIA

Brief profile of Revd. Canon Eze Onyeoguzoro Egesia. He is from Amaoji-Isingwa, Isiala Ngwa North LGA, Abia State. He attended Paul University College, Awka and Crowther Graduate Theological Seminary where he got Diploma in Theology, Bachelor's degree in Arts and Master's degree in Divinity. He was made a deacon in 2003, Priested in 2005 and installed Canon in 2015. He is married to Mrs. Promise Eziaku Eze Egesia and the marriage is blessed with four children. He is currently serving at St. Paul's Church Amavo Ukwu Parish as Vicar. He will preach at Sunday morning Holy Communion Service.

LT. Gen. AZUBUIKE IHEJIRIKA (Rtd).

Former Chief Of Army Staff, Federal Republic of Nigeria—Sept. 2010 to January 2014).

He was born on February 13, 1956, in Isuikwuato Local Government Area of Abia State. He was educated at Williams Memorial High School in Afugiri, in Umuahia North Abia State where he obtained the London General Certificate in 1975 as well as WASC with a grade I distinction. He is a member of the 18th Regular Combatant Course of the Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna and was commissioned Second Lieutenant in December 1977 into the Corps of Nigerian Army Engineers (NAE).[5] Ihejirika holds a BSc (Hons) in Quantity Survey from the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and is an alumnus of military institutions such as the Command and Staff College, Jajii and the National War College.[5]

Credit must be given to Ihejirika and his co-Service Chiefs for successfully laying the foundation for a modern and efficient force, better and able to tackle contemporary security challenges. Ihejirika introduced various reforms, training and retraining, especially on counter-terrorism and Counter-Insurgency required to effectively deal with the emerging security challenges.

He laid the groundwork that helped to overcome the challenge of re-tooling the military that was usually detached from the civil populace and mainly schooled on conventional warfare to properly understand their increasing role in civil conflicts and asymmetrical wars engulfing the whole country.

Accordingly, the Nigerian Army under Ihejirika created the Department of Civil Military Relations, the new 7 Division Maiduguri, Counter-Insurgency, and Counter Terrorism (CT COIN) training, Department of Transformation and Innovation Centre (COTI), and Nigerian Army Special Operation Command (NASOC) on terrorism.

Confronted with obsolete, inadequate, unsuitable, and sometimes non-existent military equipment, hardware, arms, and ammunition, Nigerian Army under Ihejirika had to innovate and invent to overcome the enormous security challenges that confronted the nation at the time.

The Nigerian Army Language Institute (NALI) aimed at facilitating the integration of the Nigerian Army with other neighboring countries was established under Lt. Gen. Ihejirika's leadership.

Ihejirika established the Nigerian Army 7 Division Maiduguri to ensure a more permanent presence of the Armed Forces in the area even though this decision, which was received with some misgivings by some sections of the military hierarchy has since then been embraced, and expanded by his successors.

Boko Haram was roundly beaten and wiped off from the towns and villages they were occupying and confined only to the Sambisa forest with Abubakar Shekau fatally wounded. This was the situation of the Nigerian Army under Ihejirika until he was retired on January 14, 2014. He is married to Mrs. Nnenna Ihejirika, and they are blessed with two sons.

The General addressed the synod on security issues on Thursday.

PROF. ELEAZAR UCHENNA IKONNE, Ph.D, fnoa, fnco KSC

Eleazar Uchenna Ikonne, a Professor of Optometry since 2006, is the immediate Past Vice-Chancellor of Abia State University, a position he occupied from 1st December 2015 to 30th November 2020. Under his administration, driven by philosophy of “our story must change” mantra, the University developed remarkably, infrastructurally and academically with significant moral content hence it was ranked the 27th best University in the country and 2nd best State University in Nigeria.

He served as the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic of same institution for two terms from 2011 to September 2014. He discharged himself very creditably in this position and brought dignity and decorum to the office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic as a veritable asset to the office of the Vice-Chancellor. This diligent service was visibly noticed by the then Governor of Abia State, His Excellency Chief T.A. Orji, who appointed him as the Acting Rector, Abia State Polytechnic Aba on a “Rescue Mission”.

By the Grace of God and commitment to duty, Prof. Ikonne restored the Polytechnic to an institution of repute and productivity in Academic growth within fourteen (14) months of his sojourn, it is on record that, he handed over at the Polytechnic Aba on 1st December 2015 and took over same day as the 7th substantive Vice-Chancellor of Abia State University.

Professor Ikonne has published widely in various national and international academic and professional journals. He has to his credit, two professional books of Clinical Reference Practice.

Professor Ikonne has held several academic leadership positions in the University as Head of Department, Department of Optometry for ten (10) years consecutively; Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences; Director Institute of Distance education; Deputy Provost, College of Medicine and Health Sciences.

Prof Ikonne obtained his O.D (Doctor of Optometry) degree from the Manila Central University, Philippines. He successfully completed a four year Residency programme in

Primary Eye Care which earned him fellowship of the Nigerian College of Optometrists (FNCO). He earned a Ph.D in Environment Health Sciences from the Abia State University.

He obtained WASC at Ngwa High School, Aba and HSC at St. Augustine's Grammar School, Nkwere. Professor Eleazar Uchenna Ikonne is currently the Chairman of Federal Regulatory Agency, Optometrists and Dispensing Opticians Registration Board of Nigeria. He is the President, Nigeria Post-graduate College of Optometrists.

Professor Ikonne delivered a ground-breaking inaugural titled, "SEEING IS BELIEVING (Ahunaanya Ekwe): A PARADIGM OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT" on 23rd September 2014. He has been decorated with various Awards from very notable National and International bodies, Churches and Organizations. In recognition of his exceptional quality services to humanity and intellectual capacity, the Council of Traditional Rulers in Abia State conferred on him, the title of UGOMMUTA OF ABIA STATE.

In a reception by Ukwala Ngwa Division in appreciation of the exceptional quality services as the first Vice-Chancellor from the region, the council of Traditional Ruler conferred on him the title, UDO OCHA UKWA LA NGWA.

His Autonomous Community, Agburueze-Ukwu conferred on him the title, IKEMBA OF AGBURUEZE-UKWU.

He lives a pious life and devotes much of his time to ecclesiastical services as a Bible study teacher, lay Preacher and Pastor's Warden in his local church at Church of Good Shepherd, Ehimiri Umuahia. He is a Knight of St. Christopher, KSC, since 2000.

Professor Ikonne hails from Agburuke Nsulu in Isiala Ngwa North L.G.A. he is happily married to Lady Uzoamaka Uche-Ikonne, a permanent Secretary and Solicitor General of Abia. A marriage blessed with two sons:

Dr. Chikezie Uche-Ikonne – Medical Practitioner

Dr Okezie Uche-Ikonne - Medical Statistician and Research student at Lancaster University United Kingdom

Sir. Prof. Uche Ikonne moderated the synod motion yesterday.

SIR CHUKS KAMANU, MBBCH, FWACS, FICS, DIPL. ART

Native of Obohia Ndoki, Ukwala East LGA, Abia State.

Knight of St Christopher Anglican Communion.

Prof of Obstetrics and Gynecology Abia State University Uturu,

Former Chief Medical Director Abia State University Teaching Hospital, Aba.

Fellow West African College of Surgeons (FWACS) Fellow International College of Surgeons (FICS)

Member American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)

Member American Society of Reproductive Medicine (ASRM) Dipl Reproductive Medicine and Embryology (ART)

Member of Council International College of Surgeons. (ICS) Faculty Board

Member West African College of Surgeons

EXTERNAL EXAMINER - West African College of Surgeons, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Teaching Hospital (NAUTH), University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital (UPTH), Enugu State University Teaching Hospital (ESUTH), Ebonyi State University Teaching Hospital (EBSUTH).

Sir Chuks is married with children to Lady Amaka Kamanu, who is also a renowned medical doctor.

He proposed the Synod motion yesterday.

REV. JAPHET OKEZIE OHAJURU

Rev. Japhet Okezie Ohajuru was born on the 12 December, 1962 in the family of Late Albert and Mama Lucy Ugadiya Ohajuru in Ahiaba Okpuala in Ngwa-Ukwu Ancient Kingdom in Isiala Ngwa North LGA

He holds Dip.Th; Dip.RS from St. Paul's Theological College, Awka and B.Th from Trinity Theological College, Umuahia.

He is married with Evang. (Mrs.) Chiamaka D. Ohajuru and marriage is blessed with three children. He seconded the Synod Motion.

KENN UCHE ELEMA

Mr. Kenn Uche Elema is a native of Umunwankwa Umuimo, NjikoUmunna Autonomous Community, Osioma Ngwa LGA, Abia State. He was born on 26th January, 1973. He had his primary education at Umuimo Community Primary School, and secondary education at Comprehensive Secondary School, Okpu-Umuobo, Aba.

He is a graduate of Marketing, Abia State University, Uturu and a staff of the University in the Institute for Computer Studies (ICS). He is an ICT expert with several certifications. He is also an entrepreneur and the CEO of FreshData Computers Ltd.

He is happily married to Mrs. Blessing Ada Uche-Elema and blessed with five children: 2 boys, 3 girls.

Kenn is an Anglican by birth. He was born into and baptized at St Monica's Church, Umuimo, and confirmed a communicant by Bishop Iwuagwu. He wedded in 2007 at St. Stephen's Cathedral, Umuahia and currently worships with Church of the Good Shepherd, Ehimiri in Umuahia Diocese.

His commitments to the advancement of the Church earned him several awards and recognitions in the Church:

1. 'Ezinwa' by St. Monica's Church Umuimo;
2. 'Son of Light' by the CMF of St Monica's Umuimo;
3. 'Friend of the Youth' by AYF Okigwe Diocese.
4. A Knight Nominee in Umuahia Diocese in 2009; etc.

He is a community leader with several traditional titles including “Ola Edo I” of Ngwa land by Ngwa Cultural Association (NCA), Okigwe Branch (where he served as the PRO), and other various awards and recognitions like “Defender of Ngwaland” by Federation of Ngwa Students (FNS), ABSU chapter. In his hometown, he served as the Youth President and currently the President-General of Njikoumunna Autonomous Community.

Kenn Uche Elema is dedicated to the service of God and humanity, for the positive advancement of our society. He will move the motion for the acceptance of this Address.

REV. SAMUEL CHIBUZOR WILSON

The Revd. Samuel Chibuzor Wilson was born on 3rd October 1972 into the family of Late Inspector Bob Ekeke and Nwamu Wilson of Umumbukwa in Isi-Mkporobe, Asa, Ukwa East LGA of Abia State. He is the fifth child of five sons.

He attended Ebute-metta Primary School, Denton Grammar School, Lagos – FSLC, 1983.

Ebute-metta Secondary School and later finished at Ohuru Comprehensive Secondary School Ukwa – WASC, 1988.

He obtain B.Sc. in Social Science from Abia State University in 1997. Holds PGCE and M.A. (Ed) in the same School

Further, Dip.Th in Trinity Theological College, Umuahia. M.Div from Crowther Graduate Theological Seminary, Abeokuta and just concluded his defense for doctoral dissertation (D.Min) in the School.

He is married to Evang. (Mrs.) Blessing Uchechi Wilson and the marriage is blessed with four children

He will second the motion for acceptance of this address.

MR. CHUKWUDI CHUKWUMA NWOKOMA

Born 15th August, 1991 in the family of Mr. & Mrs. Christopher Eze Nwokoma of Umuegoro-Umudaba, Etiti Amavo Autonomous Community in Osisioma Ngwa L.G.A., Abia State.

He attended St. Bridget's Primary School, Aba, Federal Government College, Okposi and Abia State Senior Science School, Ihie.

He holds B.Sc in Mass Communications from Madonna University, Okija in Anambra State.

Presently he is our Diocesan Youth Ministry Secretary and Aba Provincial Youth P.R.O. He will read the Old Testament Lesson tomorrow during our Synod thanksgiving service.

SIR JOEL JUWE UWERI, JP

Sir Joel Uweri, was born to Pa Stephen Uweri, and Ezinne Josephine Uweri. He hails from Umunede Kingdom in Ika North East Local Government Area of Delta State.

He had his primary education at Uromi in Edo State and Secondary Education at Ede Grammar School, Umunede. He is a Statistics graduate of the University of Ilorin, Ilorin and also holds a PGD and M.Sc degrees in Urban and Regional Planning.

His Working experience includes Teaching at Ekwukwu Agbor Grammar School, Ekwukwu Agbor, Ute Okpu Grammar School, Ute Okpu and later Lectured at The Federal Polytechnic, Bauchi from 1983 – 1984. He was into produce export business before joining KaviteX Industry Ltd and later Multichem Industries Ltd both as regional manager from 1987 - 2010. He is currently the CEO of Juweri Ventures Limited and Olympic Paints Limited that are into Industrial Chemicals, Paints products and Table Water.

Sir Joel has been honoured as a Justice Of The Peace (JP) by the Delta State Government. He is an avid golfer having served as the captain of the Golf section of Aba Sports Club 1926. He is a community leader with recognitions both in Aba and Umunede Communities.

He has served God through various avenues as; Peoples Warden at All Saints Cathedral, member of Aba Ngwa North Diocesan Board, member of Cathedral PCC etc. Sir Joel was invested a knight into the knighthood Order of St. Christopher in 2007. He had served as chairman of zone A Unit of the Council and currently the President of Aba Ngwa North Council of Knights.

He is married to beautiful lady Franca Uweri and this marriage is blessed with four lovely sons; Lator, Biye, Mario and Zenoy. He will read the New Testament Lesson tomorrow during our Synod thanksgiving service.

THE REV. CANON EBENEZER MBABUGHIKE EBERE OHUOCHA JP

Born 23rd July, 1957, hails from Ezianya Ntigha in Isi-Ala Ngwa North L.G.A. and attended St. Matthias (Ang.) Primary School, Ezianya Ntigha, Sam's Vocational Academy Nbawsi and obtained Vocational Certificates in RSA, Pitmans, GCE in Ordinary & Advanced levels.

He served the Diocese of Aba (Now Province) as Archdeaconry Clerk, Bursar of Ascension Junior Seminary, Umuebulungwu and the St. Mary Magdalene's Girls Seminary, Ubakala Umuahia.

By Bishops recommendation, he was awarded WCC Scholarship to study Church Management in the famous Westhill College of the University of Birmingham, England.

He also attended Trinity Theological College, Umuahia.

He was the Pioneer Financial Secretary of the Diocese of Umuahia with the then Bishop U.U. Ezuoke - Now retired Archbishop of Aba Province & Bishop of Aba Diocese.

He was also Pioneer Financial Secretary of Aba Ngwa North Diocese and Chairman of Financial Secretaries & Accountants, East of the Niger.

He is happily married to Evang. (Mrs.) Joy Onyinyechi Ohuocha and blessed with four Godly children and four grandchildren.

Ordained Deacon 1994

Priested 1995

Preferred Canon 2002 by the then Bishop U.U. Ezuoke.

He established the Diocesan offices of Umuahia, Isi Ala Ngwa and Aba Ngwa North, and served as resource person in Seminars and Symposia in Church Finance and Records in many DIOCESES East of the Niger.

The Pioneer Chaplain of Music of Aba Ngwa North (10years) and did the literary compilation of our Famous Diocesan Anthem from the History, Mission and Vision of the Bishop with Dr. Joseph Uruakpa of the blessed memory who composed the musical. He will celebrate the communion tomorrow

Ven. Levi Obinwanne Ngozichukwu Edward AAB (DRS).

He hails from Holy Trinity Church Mgboko Umuocha Village in Obingwa LGA, Abia State. He studied at the famous St. Paul's University College Awka for his Theological Training. Presently serving the vicar of Umuode Parish & Archdeacon, Umuode Archdeaconry. He will conduct Matins on Friday morning.

Ven. Chris Nlewemchi Ibe.

He was born on 3rd August 1965 to the family of Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Nnadozie Ibe of Umunweyi Umuezealafor Mbeke Isiala Mbanjo LGA of Imo State. He attended Community Primary School Obeamasa and Government Secondary School Umuagbai Ndoki in the present Oyiabo LGA of Rivers State. He also attended, Trinity Theological College Umuahia for his Priestly formation, University of Nigeria Nsukka (Alvan Campus) for his degree programme and University of Port Harcourt for his master's degree. He was made deacon in 1998, priested in 1999 by Rt. Rev Prof. A. O. Iwuagwu respectively. He was preferred a Canon in 2009 and Archdeacon in 2015. He has served in various churches in old Aba Diocese but currently the vicar of Okpu-Umuobo Parish and Archdeacon of Ngwa Central, Archdeaconry. He is happily married to Mrs. Precious Ibe and the marriage is blessed with children. He is the conductor of our Synod Thanksgiving Service.

NEWS FROM THE DIOCESE OUR LAST YEAR SYNOD

The year 2020 was a year of its kind. It was as if the whole world was literally shutting down but in all, to the Glory of our Father, God, and Sustainer of all life, we survived. So, by the providence of the Almighty God, and under His protection and guidance our 2020 synod was held at St. Gabriel's Church Umuode, Umuode Archdeaconry. The theme was “We Are... But Dust” taken from Gen. 3:19; 1 Cor. 15:47. Against all odds, the Lord gave us an unimagined success. The synod preacher was the Rt. Rev'd, Paul S. Zamani, the Lord Bishop of Diocese of Kwoi.

ARMS:

Women Ministry

Our Women Ministry is doing marvelously well to the glory of God. They started this year with the annual Workers Wives Retreat held from 5th – 7th January, 2021 with the theme “The Power and Beauty of a Woman” (1 Peter 3: 1-4) at Ngwa High School, Abayi. The retreat featured, Bible Study, Exposition, Health Talk and commitment prayer. The rededication services for women which marks the beginning of women's work for the year was held in every parish headquarters. The report gathered disclosed that the attendance of women to this event was commendable. Since it is believed that good things should be emulated we pray this synod to direct that the men should adopt this practice as a way of committing their lives, activities and responsibilities to God for the year. The Mothering Sunday activities started from Monday 8th to Sunday 14th March, 2021 with the theme “The Woman God Uses” (Joshua 2:3-4, James 2:25). Reports from churches across the Diocese indicated that this year's celebration was graceful as mothers and their families, with greater excitement, appreciated God for saving our lives in the face of the pandemic. In their zeal to evangelize, they visited our schools and less privileged homes with food, food items, clothing materials and cash. Also, in place of the usual sporting events to usher in the eve, the women were organized into groups for Open-Air evangelism at strategic junctions within the metropolis. This is the first of its kind. We commend this effort.

In the spirit of continuing to build strong relationships, establish connections with like-minded people, and even get to know each other on a more personal level, on 29th of May, all Clergy wives, secretaries in the Archdeaconries, Parishes and Stations gathered at the Cathedral for training and workshop. The clergy wives are also joining their husbands in the monthly workshop. The fruitfulness of these excises is evident in the level of commitment manifesting in their different places of work.

In addition, they played host to the Provincial Girl's Guild Unit Conference on Saturday 1st May at St. Paul's Church, Umuocham with the theme “Let Your Light So Shine” (Matt. 5:14-16). Our girls participated actively in the quiz competition as well as practical section of some home making techniques.

Our Diocesan 7th Biennial Women's Guild Conference was held from Thursday 8th to Sunday 11th July, 2021 at St. Martin's Church Akpaa I, Akpaa/Osokwa Archdeaconry with the same theme as the mothering Sunday— The Woman God Uses. We celebrated the communion and preached in the opening service as well as in the thanksgiving service. In the conference, women were reminded that Women cannot be who God says they are, and be who God

expects them to be unless they have the right idea of who they are in God's agenda. Only in the Scripture can God's intended design for women be found. For it is in finding her role in the divine purpose of God that every woman becomes useful in the hand of God. The conference was a success.

Having completed the reconstruction of a new office complex, equipped and refurbished, we on Thursday 22nd July, 2021 dedicated the Women's Work office for use. The women have completed their commitment towards the beautification of the new bishopscourt as well as furnishing the kitchen. They did also acquire piece of Land worth over four million, five hundred thousand naira which has also been surveyed. We do appreciate, applaud, and congratulate the President of our women ministry, Princess Mrs. O. N. C. Kanu—Mama Aba Ngwa North, and her leadership team for their resilience, support, and commitment to our mission and ministry. We commit the entire women of our Diocese to God's gracious keeping, blessing, and protection.

Christian Men's Fellowship (CMF)

Our men, generally, are doing very well in their different areas of ministry in the Diocese. There has been a consistent improvement and growth in our commitment to, and participation in the program and activities at all levels.

And so, our Diocesan Men's fellowship is doing very well. With gratitude to our God and Maker we are glad to announce that this year's fathers' week of celebrations was wonderfully observed. The report we gathered revealed that a good number of our men actively participated in their respective stations. The theme was “Remember, It is A Gift” (1 Cor. 4:7) . Mama Aba Ngwa North and I worshipped at the Cathedral. The activities started from Monday 14th to Sunday 21st June 2021. We commend the men for their active participation. We are grateful to all our churches for their hospitality during the celebration. As usual, our message was read in all the churches as well, reminding men of our God given responsibilities and position, knowing that all we've been blessed with, including the privilege of fatherhood, is a gift that must be used to the glory of God.

In the same manner our 2021 DCMF Conference with the same theme held at Holy Trinity Church, Umuocha for Mgboko Mission Area was adjudged successful. The Conference featured Bible Study, Talks and teachings on important topics of our Christian and human endeavours, Group Discussion and Study of Reports from Parishes. The participation of men, their support to the growth and development of our diocese and the success of the body of men were encouraging. The effort and sound planning of both the Central Planning Committee, and Local Organizing Committee are highly appreciated and commended. We appreciate the warm and hospitality we received from the membership of the hosting community, supervisor, Rev. Loveday Atuzieogu and wife. At the end of the conference, a communique and resolutions were published and attached to this address. We remain appreciative of the commitment to duty of the chaplain and entire leadership of our DCMF at all levels. We commit all men of our Diocese, their fields of labor and their families to God's mercy, Grace, and Favor.

Diocesan Council of Knights

To the honour and glory of God, our Diocesan Council of Knights is moving on in their commitment and devotion to the service of God. They started the year as usual with their annual retreat, rededication and thanksgiving service from 12th – 14th February, 2021 at St. Silas Church Ayaba Umueze with the theme “The Christian Knight and the Vanity of Life” (Eccl. 1:2). The retreat featured among other things, Holy Communion, Bible Study, Exposition and Health Talks. A good number of the Knights and their Ladies were in attendance.

Following the completion of tenure of Sir Geoffrey N. Nkoro PhD, led administration, the following persons has been elected into the administration of our council, they are: Sir Joel Uweri – President, Sir Okechukwu Nwachukwu – 1st Vice, Dame Obigeli Nnadozie – 2nd Vice, Sir Eric Nwogwugwu – Secretary assisted by Dame Stella Ngozi, Sir Obiora Okeke – Financial Secretary, Sir Wisdom Okoro – Treasurer, Sir Okechukwu Eme – Welfare Officer, Sir Collins Amaku – Chief Protocol Officer, Sir Ezeakolam Nwogwugwu – PRO, Sir Zealman Anyanwu – Protocol – 1 and Sir Kelechi Nwosu – Proctcol 2. The ladies in council also returned their current leadership for another term. We are impressed by the synergy emanating from the cooperation between the knights and ladies through their respective leadership. We pray the Almighty God to keep them focused and dedicated to the task before them. On this note, the synod stands to appreciate the effort and doggedness of the past executive of our council of knights and pray God to reward them handsomely and progressively.

We appreciate the re-kindled zeal among the members and urge them to keep it up. Our prayer is that they will become more aware of their God given responsibilities, whereby those who are not fully committed to the activities of the council and diocese shall have a rethink. We commend the new president of the council Sir Joel Uweri and his team for their renewed zeal and determination to make the council a force to reckon with within the Diocese, the Province and at the JCK. So far, our council has continued to be very active in, and at the forefront of, all provincial, Supra provincial, and JCK meetings and activities.

We charge them not to be discouraged in their commitment and ask God to help them to achieve their project proposals. As always they will continue to enjoy our support.

Diocesan Ministry of Praise

To the glory of God, Our Ministry of Praise has continued to make us proud as we can feel their impact through the improved worship experiences in our churches. Their active participation during church services as well as our Diocesan programs are quite edifying and commendable. We appreciate God for His unending mercies and Love toward them. They hold their Executive and General meetings religiously. The choir week of celebration took place from Monday 16th to 22nd August, 2021 in all churches. It was well observed. Our Biennial Diocesan singing competition kicked off on 18th September, 2021 in the various zones. In this edition, our workers will be participating and will be competing with other dioceses in the Province on the 11th December, 2021 at St. Peter's Cathedral Owerinta. We call on all leaders at all levels to do their part in seeing to the smooth running and success of this exercise. They are pleading with this Synod for Evangelism Van and other administrative equipments for smooth running of the ministry. We continue to reemphasize the need for

synod delegates to ensure that choirs in their respective archdeaconries and parishes are supported, and well equipped to enhance our worship experiences in our churches. We commend the effort of the Diocesan Chaplain, the Director, the Deputy and other members of the Music Council for their uncommon effort and pray the Almighty God to strengthen them.

Diocesan Youth Ministry

We are proud to tell this Synod that, we are pleased with the activities of the Youth Ministry in the Diocese so far. Their level of commitment is commendable. They began the year with a Prayer and Praise Vigil programme tagged “Night of favour” on Friday 29th January, 2021. They have been active to their retreats, conferences and trainings both at the Diocesan, Provincial and National levels. We appreciate the good relationship that exists between them and their leaders. As we said earlier we are still working conscientiously to see that their future will be brighter by the grace of God. They actively participated in the maiden All Youth Conference organized by our national church tagged “Joshua Generation International Youth Conference” held at the University of Nigeria Nsukka from Monday 5th – Saturday 10th March this year with the theme “Living With A Purpose” (Rom.8: 28-30), over three hundred members of our youth ministry were in attendance with about 24 of them forming part of the conference leadership. We can't thank God enough for the vision and move to have a single forum for all our youth groups in line with the rest of the arms that make up our Diocesan family. It has continued to unite our youth, enhance their development and create a smooth leadership and followership platform. We are delighted to inform this Synod that our Diocese holds the office of the Presidency of the Joint Provincial Council of the Anglican Youth Fellowship, as well as that of the National 1st Vice President, through one of us Mr. Chinedu Onwuka, the immediate past president of our Diocesan Youth Ministry. We congratulate him and pray that his leadership of the youth will draw more of our youths to Christ to the glory of God, and the honor and blessing of our diocese. We continue to call on all parents, adults and our fathers in God to continue in their support to this godly vision for the sustenance of a brighter and effective future for both our church and society.

To the glory of God our Father, they held their annual residential Diocesan Bible Study Conference at St. Clement's Church, Mbutu Umuojima Ogbu with the theme “Go Forward” (Exo. 14:15) from Thursday 9th - Saturday 11th September, 2021. The annual Youth Week of Activities and Youth Sunday were successfully observed.

They just concluded the pre-synod youth submit last week with our synod theme here in St. Augustine's Church Okpu-Umuobo. The communique from that summit forms part of the discussion at the plenary session of this synod. We shall be hosting the Joint Provincial Council of the Youth fellowship from the 29th to the 31st of this month. As we prepare for the over 300 youth expected for the council, we solicit your prayers and support for the Aba Ngwa North style of hosting. We bless all the youth of our Diocese, praying that our good Lord may graciously look upon them, leading them in the paths of righteousness, and grant them a fruitful and brighter future.

Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion (EFAC)

This group has continued to grow in strength and grace in their commitment to what we do in fulfilling the vision of this diocese both in their local churches and at diocesan level. They embark on Bible Study, Outreaches, Crusades and Evangelism. They participated in the annual praying and fasting retreat organized by the zonal leadership at Lady Grace Iwuagwu Juniorate School Ogbor Hill, Aba with the theme "Walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16). They hold their Joint Fellowship every 3rd Sunday of every month at Ngwa High School, Abayi and also attended the EFAC National Convention held at Ibadan with 11 persons in attendance. We pray for more strength and zeal in their followership. Beginning with the first quarter of 2022, and in line with our renewed zeal and commitment to mission and evangelism, we direct that the Diocesan EFAC will plan and engage in a quarterly personal evangelism campaign in areas already mapped out by the mission board. We then ask the EFAC leadership and the mission board to liaise for effectively planning and execution of this mandate.

Anglican Children Ministry (ACM)

God has been faithful to us through the Anglican Children Ministry of our diocese. They started the year's activities with a 2 day prayer retreat from Friday 19th to Sunday 21st February at St. Paul's Church, Umuocham. The programme among other things featured the rededication service for all the ACM teachers and chaplains in the diocese. This ministry is committed to Evangelism and leadership workshop. Their week of activities this year was awesome in all our churches. A diocesan ACM bible quiz was conducted among the 13 Archdeaconries/Mission Areas, 3 candidates were selected to represent the diocese in the Provincial level. At the Provincial level our children came home with the second position trophy. We commend their leadership for this feat. At the National Conference hosted by Ika Diocese on 2nd to 5th September, 2021, we participated very well. One of our children with two others from the Province contested at the National Bible quiz on behalf of the Province and won the 3rd position. However, this ministry needs support from the clergy and parents in our Diocese and plead with the synod to support them with evangelical equipments and trophies for Diocesan Bible Quiz competition. We are sure that no one is unaware of the premium we place on this ministry to our children. We cannot afford to fail in making the best of these young ones. We remind all committee members and all leaders of our local churches, that one of our major responsibilities is to make every one of these children the most committed Anglican possible and unwavering defender of the Christian faith. No commitment to this course could ever be too much. We commit all our children to the protective watch of the Almighty, praying that nothing, even the ungodly dispositions of our time, would be able to separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, their Friend and Lord.

Diocesan Board of Mission and Evangelism

We are grateful to God for His grace which is made manifest on the Board of Mission and Evangelism of our Diocese. We are happy to inform this Synod that the effort of our Board of Mission to ensure the actualization of the vision of our diocese across the Archdeaconry,

Mission Area, and beyond are commendable. They are working on their proposal of sending members to churches within the diocese with structural and spiritual challenges for the purposes of raising fund and revival. May God crown their effort with success in Jesus Name. We applaud the efforts of the board and her leadership.

As we said earlier, they will work together with the EFAC come next year for some more rugged mission and evangelism expedition within and outside the Diocese.

Sunday School/Bible Study Program

This body has continued to coordinate our Bible Study and Sunday School Program across the diocese. They organize facilitators' workshops to train, equip and review what they have been doing in line with the realization of the vision of bringing the message of the love of Christ to the people and to encourage every member to take same to others. The workshops are aimed at improving the quality of our Bible study and Sunday school programs. They have continued to produce our Bible Study manual yearly, making for a good understanding and assimilation of our Synod messages. We can attest that our Bible study manual now enjoys a wider usage, even outside Nigeria. We continue to enjoin all men to make the most of this gift for our spiritual growth and nourishment. That of the 2021/2022 is ready for use. We appreciate the commitment and efforts of our Diocesan Bible Study Coordinator, the Sunday school Board and their team of contributors for such an inspired work.

Prison Ministry

The mission of Prison Ministry is to share the transforming love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ to the hearts and lives of incarcerated men, women and youth, so as to become loving and productive citizens of their communities and society at large. It is a Christian ecumenical ministry which addresses the spiritual needs of inmate.

Our Diocesan team celebrated the 2021 Easter with the inmates in Aba Prisons with drugs and other refreshment items.

We are thinking now of expanding the activities of this group to include the area of ministry where those in recovery will come to experience a caring and accepting community. This reformation will help in changing the mindset of inmates from incarceration through recovery to a meaningful life in the community and society at large. This vision is in the developmental stages. Please pray for God's direction for this project.

Staff Training, Development and Welfare

Among the major programmes, this Diocese is ensuring the day to day development, training and welfare of workers at all levels. Conferences, Seminars and Workshops for all staff of this diocese have continued to regular part of our life. The creation of Diocesan Marriage

Committee is not to interfere with the private life of a worker but to ensure that his or her welfare is secured. This Diocese has offered every worker and worker's wife opportunity to upgrade his/her knowledge to every level of their choice with the diocese providing some financial assistance. We have encouraged routine medical checkup for workers at all categories, plans are on in making it a compulsory policy and to more regular in an approved place. Following the admission of 15 members of our workforce into Trinity Theological College, Umuahia for studies, this diocese has 31 members of her workforce in different Universities pursuing different courses of study ranging from bachelors to Doctoral degrees. On this background the Diocesan Board in one of her meetings has directed that the least qualification for the post of local helper must be 5 credits in WAEC, GCE or its equivalent, with English and Christian Religious Knowledge inclusive, knowing that most of these local helpers are likely going to move up to regular ecclesiastical workers.

Diocesan Lay Readers Association

The Lay Readers of our diocese have consistently engaged themselves committedly to their duties on the daily activities of our church, demonstrating high level of loyalty and dedication to the service of Christ and humanity through the church. They hold their meetings regularly. The structural six zones of the body in our diocese are doing well to the glory of God. The 12th Edition of her Annual Retreat was held from Thursday 25th to Sunday 28th of March, 2021 at St. Stephen's Church, Umuobasi-Amavo with the theme "Who Am I?" (Gen. 2:7-8; 3:19). A total of 110 Lay Readers were in attendance. At the end of the retreat there was an election of new officers. We congratulate the new leaders as we appreciate their efforts and commitment so far. To the glory of God 75 new members were added to the association on 3rd July, 2021 during Ordination/Commissioning & Licensing service held at St. Clement's Church, Mbutu Umuojima Ogbu. We commend the leadership of our Diocesan School of Ministry for effectively preparing these noble men and women for the ministry.

Sports, Physical & Health Development

The gains and benefits of living a quality and healthy life cannot be over emphasized. Studies have shown that what it takes to treat and maintain a sick life is far greater than the cost of living itself. Among the recommended means and ways of living a healthy life is engaging on a routine physical exercise and training. In this Diocese living a strong, healthy life is our slogan, it is on the importance of health development, that 'enjoyment' is a norm in Aba Ngwa North. Our monthly Diocesan sports and physical training cannot be replaced or exchanged with any other activity. We urge every member and worker of Aba Ngwa North never to welcome any engagement that will deprive him/her the ample opportunity of joining the rest of us in our monthly physical exercise and training. We encourage every member and worker to create a time individually for relaxation and physical exercise as their benefits are beyond what money can buy. Remember here in Aba Ngwa North, we prefer a befitting life to a befitting burial.

Diocesan NYSC Chaplaincy

We are grateful to God Almighty for the Diocesan NYSC Chaplaincy in their commitment at ensuring that youth corp members, particularly Anglicans, posted to the state enjoy a peaceful atmosphere, security and socialization. The need for a corp members' lodge in the diocese has

been a serious challenge, therefore we solicit for the assistance of all good Anglicans to help us see that we secure more rooms for them. This will enhance their performance in service, commitment to the church.

EVENTS:

Diocesan Harvest 2020

To the glory of God, on Saturday 12th December 2020, we gathered as a Diocese in appreciation to God for all His benefits toward us. The theme was “Harvest of Restoration” (Joel 2:25). It was a moment of joy and praise to Almighty. The thanksgiving attracted so many arms of our Diocese. It was well organized and attendance was encouraging more than the previous years. We are grateful to all the Archdeaconries and Mission Areas for their ability in organizing and mobilizing their members for this service and pray the Almighty God to continue to bless them, and replenish their sources. We will not fail to thank the Organizing Committee ably led by Mr. Cyprian Iheanyichukwu Ubani for allowing God to use them. We are also grateful to the preacher, the Rev. Alexander Arimadu, the Vicar of Ayaba Umueze II Parish for declaring the mind of God for His Church. We are all grateful to God for leading us all through the hard time of last year. To Him alone be all the glory, honour, majesty and adoration in Jesus name. Amen.

Diocesan Thanksgiving

As usual, every year we come together as a family to thank God Almighty for His goodness and mercy towards us as a Diocese and rededicate ourselves for service in the year. This took place on Saturday the 6th day of February, 2021 at our Cathedral. The preacher was Sir Geoffrey N. Nkoro PhD. It was a moment of joy and dancing as we expressed our gratitude to God Almighty for sparing our lives. Among the features of the day include thanksgiving by Archdeaconries and Mission Areas in their orders, and special rendition by the choirs to the glory of God, we were richly blessed. In our process of harmonization of programs and activities for the smooth running of the Diocese, we have resolved with the endorsement of the Diocesan Board to merge Diocesan Harvest and Diocesan Thanksgiving Services together beginning from next year. Our Diocesan Thanksgiving Service which holds every first Saturday in the month of February every year will feature among other things harvest presentations. By this we envisaged a better participation and performance. And so pray God that His work in our individual lives shall not cease to keep and preserve us as a diocese while we continue to offer Him praise and thanksgiving as a family in Jesus name. Amen.

Ordination, Commissioning of Catechists and Licensing of Lay Readers:

To the glory of God, on Saturday 3rd July 2021 at St. Clement's Church Mbutu Umuojima, we performed the Priestly Ordination of eight (8) Priests, commissioned twenty-one (21)

Catechists and licensed seventy-five (75) Lay Readers. The Preacher was Ven. E. E. Egbulefu Ph.D. We congratulate them and wish them success in their ministry.

Ezinne Rachael Onunwa Kanu at 86 (Nne Bishop)

It was a season of rejoicing and thanksgiving to God Almighty as we gathered at St. Peter's Church, Obegu on Saturday 26th June this year to celebrate our living legend and epitome of godly motherhood, our dear mother Ezinne Rechael Onunwa Kanu, during her 86th birthday celebration. We can't thank God enough for granting quality life and good health to our mother and for the opportunity to celebrate her alive "Ihe adi ndu eme nka nma". We sincerely thank the Planning Committee for their selfless effort.

We are profusely grateful to all members of this Diocese, in particular, and all else who honored our dear mother with your presence. We pray that the good Lord will replenish and favor you all.

RETREATS

CPC/PCC/Vestry Committee Retreat 2021

As part of our Diocesan vision, we are making sure that leadership at every level of our diocese is equipped with the necessary tools and ideas that will stand the test of time in fulfilling the purpose of God for our generation. So in order to continue to have leaders who are well informed in the management and service of God, on Saturday 6th March, and 8th May, 2021 respectively at our Cathedral, members of CPC, PCC, and Vestry Committees of every church convened for equipping and dedication through series of study. The theme was "You are...But Dust" (Gen. 3:19). We thanked one of our own, Ven. Rex Ufomba PhD for being used of the Lord in blessing us through the retreat. The major aim was to build our faith in Christ Jesus and prepare our hearts to be used of God at any level we are given opportunity to serve. It also afforded the participants opportunity to ask questions on the Church matters and policies of the Diocese. Those who attended the retreat were made to know that membership of PCC or vestry in their local churches is a platform in which they could serve God and contribute to the propagation of the gospel through their life style. Over 400 members were in attendance. We must be willing to learn so as to be able to teach and lead effectively. We thank the organizers for effectively organizing the retreat.

H.O.D 2021

Our 2021 Heads of Departments and Chaplains Retreat was held on Wednesday 26th and Thursday 27th of May 2021 at St. Philip's Chapel Ngwa High School, Abayi. The retreat took its theme from the last Synod theme "Understanding Your Position As A Mere Dust In Fulfilling God's Redemptive Agenda for Humanity Via The Church –The role of A HOD/Chaplain."

The retreat featured – Bible Study, Exposition on the theme, Group Discussions, among other things. During the Group Discussions the following issues bothering on the life and development of the Diocese were deliberated upon:

1. Moving the Diocese forward in the present economic condition – practical ways.
2. The participation of Heads of Department in the planning of our Synods for more fruitful Synod.
3. Proactive ways and means to promote our Diocesan schools in order to attract the attention of public.

Their position of leadership and stake-holders of the diocese were clearly highlighted through the studies and presentations. The Heads of Department, Chaplains and Diocesan Officials were called to wake up to the challenges of their duties. The retreat ended with resolutions and recommendations on the issues discussed.

Diocesan Prayer Convocation 2021

To the glory of God, the unified Prayer Convocation of our Diocese, the first of its kind where uniquely organized this year. The usual Women Prayer retreat to begin the year, and the Diocesan Prayer conference were merged together. The prayer convocation took place at the Cathedral from the 26th -27th January 2021 and the theme was “The reign of God; The Place of Watchman” (Isaiah 52:7-8). We gave the opening charge, while the Ven. Dr. Udo Obioma, and Evang. Eze Onyenso handled the theme talks respectively. The crowd was intimidating as the cathedral sanctuary was filled to the brim up to the gallery. Praise and special Prayer sessions were congregationally and joyfully observed as the Lord of the church gave us utterance. In other developments, the National Prayer Convocation held at Gwagwalada Diocese within the 22nd – 26th March, 2021 and the Provincial Prayer Convocation held at St. Peter's Cathedral Owerinta, Diocese of Isiala Ngwa South on Monday 19th through Wednesday 21st April, 2021 were well by our diocesan representatives. We commend the effort of the Prayer Coordinators for their effort in carrying out our vision as it pertains their offices. We direct and encourage Archdeaconries and parishes to hold their prayer convocations prior to that of the Diocese.

Diocesan Endowment Fund

It is unfortunate, that the record of the progress of this fund as presented during the last Diocesan Board Meeting prior to this Synod is showing that majority of the men and women of our Diocese for whatever reason, have refused to show interest and participation in this regard, and this has caused a major setback in the wheel of progress of the lot the Lord has placed in our shoulders as a diocese to perform. We hope, that through and after this synod our members shall see the need to queue into this program which if supported will place the Diocese on the path of steady financial progress in pursuing her projects and mission. Remember this project is our own, and we must ensure our total commitment to help, contribute and involve ourselves in it with all sincerity to achieve the goal for which it was created.

PROJECTS

New Cathedral Project

To the glory of God, the foundation laying of the proposed project was laid on 11th November, 2020 by our Primate, the Most Rev'd. Henry Chukwudum Ndukuba, in the presence of the Most Rev'd. Isaac C. Nwobia, PhD, Archbishop of Aba Province and other bishops within and outside the Province. Work has continued to go on at the site, though at a very slow pace due to financial and logistic handicap. We expect that after the synod, the building committee will be energized to speed up action. We covet your prayers for the Lord of the church to raise men and women He would use to actualize the work in a record time.

Agricultural Investment

Our Diocesan poultry farm is back in full force. We have taken some security measures at the farm to prevent the loss we suffered last season. In the next couple of weeks, we shall begin the sale of eggs and broilers. We therefore urge members of our Diocese and the general public to avail themselves the opportunity of getting the best stock of our products. Remember we don't produce just chickens and eggs, we produce Christian chickens and eggs that are heavenly nutritiously endowed.

Bookshop/ICT

We thank God for these units of our Diocese. We stand to announce to this synod that our ICT Centre is tremendously improving. Those that have recently worked with us can attest to that, a trial they say will convince you. We have expanded our services to doing all forms of lamination, producing flyers, flexes, digital printing, in addition to our quality and up to date computer literacy programs.

And our Bookshop in collaboration with African Christian Textbooks (ACTS) is waxing stronger. We call on you, during break, to visit our bookshop stand at the synod and testify. Always visit us at the cathedral for purchase and or to place orders for any Christian book or literature you may need. We encourage you to cultivate the habit of reading, it helps to improve your life quality.

Communion Wafer Industry

Our wafer industry is standing out to the glory of God. We are steadily producing to ensure that churches around us will not run shortage of communion bread and we sale at affordable price in comparison to the competition. Remember, you commune better with Aba Ngwa North Communion elements.

DIOCESAN SCHOOLS

Ngwa High School Abayi and St. Anne's Secondary School, Umuobasi Amavo

The Diocese has not relented in her effort to ensure a total restoration of life and character through teaching and learning and restructuring of the schools returned to us by the Abia State Government despite our meager resources. In Ngwa High School the academic performance of her students in national exams is heartwarming indicating that better days lies ahead. We are happy to announce that in the 2019/2020 examination result the school had 95.5% overall. The management of the school is progressively putting up their best for desired result, we commend them. The commitment of the chaplain in keeping the spiritual life of the teachers and students is highly appreciated. Presently the school is blessed with modern science laboratories and equipments and quality teachers, coupled with the physical structure and serene spiritual environment. We just acquired a 75KVA generator for steady power supply for our students who live in the dormitory.

We are very grateful to the old boys of Ngwa high school, ably led by Sir Mike Ahamba, SAN for their unequal commitment and support in seeing to the upkeep and running of the school. We sincerely pray for God's favor upon everyone of them. Every year they give a cash donation of N600,000 to the best performing students from each of the classes, and this with other incentives provided for the students has spurred our students to study hard and behave better.

Therefore we urge the delegates of the synod and the general public to register their children for the new academic school year. You will be glad you did.

On the other hand, we are struggling against many odds to see that St. Anne's secondary school stays afloat. We appreciate the efforts of the principal and staff so far, as we promise to do all we can as a Diocese to put the school back on the path of steady improvement. We call on all good spirited individuals to assist us in rebuilding this great institutions that produced great men and women, both as a teacher training and secondary school.

Diocesan School of Ministry, Management and Leadership Training

This school which we started six (6) years ago has graduated students who have gained admission at our prestigious Trinity Theological College, Umuahia. This is also in line with our vision to ensure that every church in this diocese hears and enjoys the true and undiluted word of God, notwithstanding the person behind the pulpit. The need for sound teaching and interpretation of the word of God by both the clergy and lay workers prompted the necessity for the establishment of the school and we are glad to say that it is a welcomed development. Our lay workers are now serving with improved skill in the basic knowledge of the scripture, church leadership and management. Meanwhile, this school put through 75 candidates who were licensed on Saturday 3rd July, 2021 as lay readers. With this, we have instructed that all the older Lay Readers should enroll to get updated and ready in following the progression of the vision of the diocese and her leadership. As you can testify, those of you whose lay workers were students of this prestigious school can notice the level of change that has taken place in their ministry. In response to the demands of our time, we've expanded the program of the school to include management and leadership training. We've widen the scope of both our

faculty and facilities to accommodate the new focus. We now offer management and leadership consultation and training for churches, schools, companies, and government bodies.

We give kudos to our clergymen who doubled as the lecturers for their commitment and extra effort to see that this vision is achieved. So encourage and support this school as much as you can to ensure increase in her population and output.

Dedications

History was made on Wednesday 11th November 2020 as Our modern bishops court building was dedicated by the Primate of All Nigeria, His Grace the Most Rev'd Henry Chukwudum Ndukuba, with the assistance of other bishops from our Province. We commend the committee, and all our members both men and women, the arms and some parishes for contributing their quota towards the realization of this project. We are grateful to God who has been our help in ages past and our hope for years to come. To Him alone be all the glory, honour and majesty.

Others:

25.10.2020: Dedication of Lock-up stores, Choir stall, Altar marble rail, Altar table, Ten Altar seats and one Bishop's Altar seat at St. Barnaba's Church, Ayaba Umueze.

13.06.2021: Dedication of marble pulpit at St. John's Church, Umuoyorongwa

20.06.2021: Dedication of eight Altar marble seats, one Bishop's marble seat, two marble candle stand and marble Credens at All Saints' Cathedral, Abayi Umuocham

08.07.2021: Dedication of one marble seat at St. Martin's Church, Akpaa I

23.07.2021: Dedication of Our Diocesan Women's Work Office.

COFIRMATION AND ADMISSIONS

Within the period under review, we visited the under listed Parishes for confirmation and admissions:

Date	Parish	Conf	CMF	MU	WG	GG	Evang. Support
25.10.20	Ayaba Umueze II	32	6	5	14	13	34,225
08.11.20	Okpu-Umuobo II	20	-	3	-	2	65,010
29.11.20	Umucham	88	10	5	19	8	664,685
06.12.20	Asa Amato	49	1	4	13	10	76,820
13.12.20	Umuihuoma/Umuarakpa	12	3	2	2	3	18,580
27.12.20	Amavo-Ukwu	15	-	-	2	4	82,650
07.01.21	Old paper sold	-	-	-	-	-	10,000
31.01.21	Umuimo	25	-	-	-	-	26,440
13.06.21	Umuoyoro Ngwa	18	2	-	2	2	28,840
03.07.21	Ordination	-	-	-	-	-	400,000
02.07.21	World Bank	48	3	-	3	4	100,200
	Total	307	25	19	55	46	1,507,450

Mission and Evangelism Fund Disbursement:

The evangelism support realized during our Episcopal and other Diocesan functions within the period stated in the table above was administered in the following:

	N
St. Philip's Church Women, Abayi	100,000
The Anglican Church of Epiphany Women, Agalaba	100,000
St. Barnabas' Church Women, Okpu-Umobo	100,000
A student from St. Silas Church Ayaba Umueze	45,000
New Generator House at Ngwa High School	350,000
ACM Hall at St. John's Church, Umuchichi part	84,000
Ecumenism Conference	50,000
Visit to inmates	44,800
House rent of Mrs. Ahukanna	100,000
DIVCCON expenses	300,000
	1,273,800

OUR JOY

Rev. Canon & Evang. Mrs. Emmanuel Ehilegbu – BBB

Rev. & Evang. Mrs. Uzoma Atuzieogu - BBB

Rev. & Evang. Mrs. Anderson Baaba - BBG

Rev. & Evang. Mrs. Charles Anulobi - BBB

Rev. & Mrs. Bernard C. Amadi - BBG

Rev. & Evang. Mrs. Chinedu Chijioke - BBB

Rev. & Evang. Mrs. Christian O. Nwoko - BBB

Rev. & Mrs. Achimba, Kenneth - Wedded

Cate. & Mrs. Esinna, V. Nnadozie - BBB

Mr. & Mrs. Ifeanyi Okwu - Wedded

Mr. & Mrs. Ozigara - BBB

Mrs. Chinwe Aso (Nee Emeka) - Wedded

Mrs. Christiana Iheanacho (Nee Eze) - BBG

OUR SORROW

Very sadly in our hearts we lost the following members of our diocese since the last synod:

Ven. Christopher Denkoro

Sir. (Pharm) Chijioke Uhie

Sir. Samuel Iheonunekwu

Lady Lovina Izima

NEWS FROM ABA PROVINCE

Aba Provincial Harvest 2020 was held at St. Michael's Cathedral Aba on Wednesday 25th November 2020 with the theme “Lord Our Supplier” (Phil. 4:9). Our Diocese participated greatly. We thank you all for your support towards the harvest and attendance too, and pray God to reward you abundantly.

On the 21st of August, our Diocese hosted all the clergy of Aba Province and their wives, the bishops and resource persons during the Aba Provincial Clergy and Wives workshop. The retreat was a huge success to the glory of God. We applaud the unity, commitment and resilience of our clergy force in planning and hosting the program.

All the Council, Episcopal and Women Ministry meetings and activities of our Province are going on well. We appreciate the leadership of our Archbishop and wife. We continue to pray for their strong health, success and for the rest of the bishops, clergymen and members.

NEWS FROM FORMER PROVINCE II

The Dedication of the 104 – room guest house at Goshen Anglican Retreat Centre Owerri built by the Superannuation Fund of the Niger Anglican Churches was done on Wednesday 17th March, 2021 by the Chairman, Joint Provincial Council, Dioceses East of the Niger this was followed by the Episcopal and Council meeting of the Eastern Provinces on 18th March, 2021 at the Cathedral Church of the Transfiguration of our Lord, Owerri. We thank God for the completion of this project and successful dedication.

NEWS FROM CHURCH OF NIGERIA

DIVCCON 2020

This all important conference of the church of Nigeria Anglican Communion took place from Sunday 16th to Thursday 19th November, 2020 at the National Christian Ecumenical Centre Abuja, with the theme **“WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS” (Romans 8:37)**.

It is worthy of note that our Diocese has won the first position for the past three years as the best mobilized Diocese to this conference. We congratulate you all for the feat. Registration for this year's has begun. We encourage every faithful of our diocese to register and be prepared to attend. Holding the National trophy for these three years is the Lord's doing and honour, we cannot afford to lose. Above all, the conference has been known to be a source of spiritual refreshment and equipping tool for Christian living. So avail yourself this opportunity to rekindle your spiritual life and be enriched for a more purposeful living.

Last year we registered a total number of four hundred and thirty-eight (438) delegates. Our target this year is one thousand (1000) delegates. So pray and register, and prepare to attend too. This year's DIVCCON has been scheduled for 8th – 12th November 2021.

Our Diocese has continued to actively participate in the overall life, ministry and activities of the National church. Our attendance to the Episcopal, standing committee meetings, Legal Officers' Conference and the just concluded Church of Nigeria Standing Committee at Lagos has been impeccable. To God be all the glory.

St. Matthias's Day Fund

This important offering to support the mission of our National church was observed in our churches. A total sum of N 2,182,870.00 (Two Million, One Hundred and Eighty Two Thousand, Eight Hundred and Seventy Naira only) was raised and remitted to the Church of Nigeria. We pray God to bless you all.

Advent Sunday Collection

By the grace of God, the Advent collection for our National church was observed in our churches as well and the sum of N434,335.00 (Four Hundred and Thirty – Four Thousand, Three Hundred and Thirty-Five Naira only) was raised and has been remitted to Church of Nigeria Advent account.

2021 Bishop's Annual Retreat

To the glory of God our Father, the usual annual Bishop's Retreat for the year 2021, at Ibru Centre, Agbarha-Otor was held from Monday 4th to Friday 7th January, 2021, with the theme “Servant Leadership: The Imperative of Jesus Christ” (Matt. 20:20-28) and we were in attendance.

Standing Committee

Church of Nigeria Standing Committee meetings were held at All Saints' Cathedral, Diocese on the Niger, Onitsha, Anambara State from Monday 8th to Friday 12th February, 2021 with the theme “Costly Commitment; The Imperative in Following Jesus Christ” (Luke 9:23) and at Lagos Diocese from Monday 20th to Friday 24th with the theme “Abiding in Christ: God's Panacea in An Unstable World,” taken from John 15:1-8. Our diocese was ably represented through our delegates, we thank you for your prayers.

Strategic Mission and Empowerment Training

Mission is not one of the duties of the Church, but the main duty of the Church. There is Church today because there was mission yesterday, but there will be no Church tomorrow if there is no mission today. For this reason, the Primate of All Nigeria Anglican Communion saw the need to assemble us at Lagos West Diocese for a 5 day Retreat tagged “A Strategic Mission Empowerment and Mobilization Training Programme for World Changers” from Tuesday 20th to Saturday 24th April, 2021. We applaud our Primate for this well packaged programme.

NEW BISHOPS

The following Bishops were elected, consecrated and enthroned within the period under review:

The Rt. Rev'd Peter Oludipe – Ijebu

The Rt. Rev'd Adegoke Agara - Idoani

The Rt. Rev'd Enoch Atuboyedia - Okrika

The Rt. Rev'd Gabriel Elabor – Esan

The Rt. Rev'd Obiora Uzochukwu – Mbamili

The Rt. Rev'd Oluwagbemiro Fabuluje – Oke-Osu

The Rt. Rev'd Victor Okporu – Western Izon

The Rt. Rev. Prof. Nnoyi Egbe - Calabar

TRANSLATIONS

The Rt. Rev'd Henry Okeke from Mbamili to Ideato

RETIRED ARCHBISHOPS/BISHOPS

The Most Rev'd Tunde Adeleye – Calabar

The Most Rev'd Caleb Maduoma – Ideato

The Most Rev'd Friday Imaekhia – Esan

The Rt. Rev'd Robison Abere – Okirika

The Rt. Rev'd Amos Fagbamiye – Trinity, North America

The Rt. Rev'd Ezekiel Dahunsi Dahusi – Idoani

The Rt. Rev'd Tubokosiemi Abere – Okirika

The Rt. Rev'd Prof Andrew Igenozza – Crowther Graduate Theological Abeokuta

The Rt. Rev'd Edafe B. Ememezi – Western Izon

NEW ARCHBISHOPS

The Most Rev'd Dr. David O.C. Onuoha – Owerri

The Most Rev'd Blessing Enyindah – Niger Delta

OUR SYNOD THEME

“ARE YOU READY TO DIE”

Anchor text:(Philippians NIV 1:21)

“For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.”

Introduction

For every life and every human endeavor to be fruitful and successful, such must be purpose driven with a strongly held conviction. No one has ever succeeded in life without following a conviction. Our text strongly portrays a demonstration and declaration of someone's conviction and willingness to give it his all to defend it. But before we go further into exploring this facts, let's take a brief look at the context through which they are conveyed—

The Church in, and the city of, Philippi

Luke described the city called Philippi as a Roman colony (Acts 16:12). The emperor Augustus allowed retired soldiers to live there after they had supported him in a battle in 31 BC. As a Roman colony, its citizens possessed the same rights and laws as those who lived in Italy. The city was an important city in Macedonia, in the north of Greece, and Paul visited it in about AD 52.

Paul and Silas, with Timothy and Luke, established the church there after they crossed from Asia into Europe. We read in Acts 16:11–40 how he first preached to a small group beside the river, then built up the Christian congregation there until he had to leave because of violent demonstrations against his teaching. Paul visited Philippi again on his third journey (Acts 20:1–6). He paid two more visits, probably in AD 57 and 58 (Acts 20:1&6). During this time the congregation had been growing. They knew they owed their existence as a congregation to Paul, and they kept in touch with him by letters. The Christians in Philippi were not rich, but they supported Paul with more than one gift of money. When he needed help for Poor Jews in Judaea, they sent him money. When he himself was in prison, they sent him a gift. There was real friendship between Paul and the Christians at Philippi, as we see from verses such as 1:7; 2:12; 4:1. It was a group of Christians of whom Paul was very fond. He called its members his 'joy and crown' (4:1).

So he wrote to them chiefly in order to maintain and strengthen this friendship which began when he first visited the City. Other reasons that necessitated the letter were to use his personal experiences and present circumstance (life in prison awaiting possible execution) to encourage them to remain faithful to the gospel and their faith in Christ. To report to them on the condition of one of their own, Epaphroditus, who was sick, but has recovered and ready to come back to them. Finally Paul wrote to the Philippians to appeal for unity and for the end of quarrels in the young church. The section of the letter from which our theme is drawn presents Paul using his personal experiences and circumstances in his Christian journey, and his commitment to, conviction of, and faith in, the gospel of Christ, to challenge and strengthen the Philippians then, and now us today, to same commitment, conviction and faith.

An objective study of our theme text will reveal that the message there in is not to prepare the readers for death either physically or otherwise. Rather, and against the interpretation of some, the message there in is to equip, challenge, and encourage us to live and live positively so that even after death, we would continue to enjoy the fruit of the positive impact of our earthly life. This brings me to the response we received at the announcement of this synod's theme to both the Diocesan staff members and the Board. As they did, we still believe most of us have answered a big NO to the question posed by the theme. And now I ask you all here present, in the words of our synod theme, ARE YOU READY TO DIE.? As you can see, almost everyone answered no. You answered no as if we ask "Do you want to die?" Or "Are you prepared to die"? Just like the text, our synod theme is not about asking anyone to prepare to die. We've been hearing about this all our life time, and above all, why waste a whole synod session asking people to prepare to die knowing that whether we prepare or not, death will come. So the aim of the synod theme is to challenge and encourage all Christians, in particular, and all men and women in general, to seek and hold strongly unto some conviction

that will propel their life to positively impact on others, and be willing to die defending such conviction.

At this point, let's have a short insight into a word that will continue to feature prominently all through this presentation. —**Conviction**

- I. A conviction is something that you purpose in your heart, as a fabric of your belief system. It is one that you will not change due to any circumstance. It says, “When you believe that your God has required something of you, you will withstand all of the tests put to you.” It has been said that a man is never made by a crisis. The crisis exposes the man for what he already is.

There are parallels to this in the history of the three Hebrew children in the book of Daniel. When taken into captivity, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego purposed in their hearts not to defile themselves. It was something about which they determined with resolve.

1. **A conviction must be pre-determined.** When Nebuchadnezzar erected his golden image and commanded that all the people bow when the instruments played, these three men stood erect. A question might be asked at this point, where were all the other Hebrews? There were more than three Hebrews in Babylon who must have been in compliance with the King's orders, for only these three Hebrews, who had predetermined what they would do, remained standing.
2. **A conviction is a personal belief.** If you require others to stand with you to maintain your beliefs, then your beliefs are preferences and not convictions. Your belief must be a personal conviction regardless of what anyone else thinks or does. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did stand together, but in reality they stood alone. Their decision was made more difficult when going against other Hebrews who gave up to the pressure of impending death.
3. **A conviction is non-negotiable.** When they were brought before the king, Nebuchadnezzar did a strange thing. He broke the law by giving them a second chance. They said to the king that they did not have to be careful how they answered him. They had resolved that they were not going to bow and that was not going to change. They told the king that this was a matter of faith and non-negotiable.

In preparing for this address, we identified Two main pillars that hold any society, and or structure. And for any society or structure to succeed and stand the test of time, everyone involved in the life of such society or structure must be willing to freely, not just subscribe to these pillars, but also be willing to protect and defend their integrity at all cost and in all circumstances. These pillars are—The Philosophy (Truth), and The Modus Operandi (The way) of the society or structure. And as long as these pillars are stood for and defended, the Continuity (Life) of the society or structure is firmly secured and assured.

The Truth: The truth is the philosophy on which every society or structure is founded. It is the truth that clearly defines every society or structure and sets the path it must follow. So when you are living in, and or serving under a society, and or, structure, and you are a person of conviction, you believe that what you know is the truth and you are grounded in that truth. You stand by the truth whether it appears to the rest of the world as foolish or archaic, and regardless if it is not politically correct or not part of some fad. You believe that the truth is True and that it is not determined by a popular vote, or by its convenience. Today, relativism teaches that there is no absolute truth, only personal subjective versions. But the Truth cannot be bent or moulded to fit personal situations or the times. The Truth is timeless. When you are truly grounded in the Truth, you believe from your core and you are prepared to defend it. At times you may be criticised as hopelessly, out of date, and out of touch. Yet you are prepared to forgo popularity in order to defend the Truth, knowing that any form of compromise will spell doom for the life of the society or structure. That means “You are ready to die for the Truth”.

The Way: The way is the Modus Operandi of every society or structure. This means the processes and practices the society and or structure must follow to maintain her philosophy (truth) and sustain her continuity (life). The way here refers to the right way. The very way that the founders of the society and or structure have chosen that it be run. May not be the way that seems good to the present participants, but the way that is right for the life of the society or structure. All present stakeholders and participants must be willing to defend, and even sacrifice for the way. Remembering those who gave it their all so that you and I can have the society or structure we have today, and for the same to hold true for future generations, no less is expected of us. We must be ready to die for the right way to be followed at all times and for Life to continue.

One will go unnoticed if one didn't have convictions or failed to reveal them.” According to a German thinker, Heinrich Heine, “People in those old times had convictions; we moderns have only opinions. And it needs more than a mere opinion to erect a Gothic cathedral.” No greatness can come from mere opinions. It takes strong convictions backed with the willingness to die for your beliefs to bring about serious change. In other words, you need to be dead serious before you are taken seriously. A man of conviction is every ready to die for his conviction.

A conviction is a belief that shapes your behavior. It's something you believe so strongly that it determines the way you act. While an opinion is something you'll discuss or even argue about, a conviction is something you'll die for.

The people who've made the greatest change in this world—for good or bad—were not the smartest or the wealthiest. They were those with the deepest convictions.

Our society says every value is up for grabs. It says you can do whatever you want, with no moral absolutes.

But the truth is that if you don't stand for something, you'll fall for anything. Today we need people with conviction who know what they believe.

What then is this synod saying at this point? We are saying that any man or woman who holds no conviction that he/she is ready to die for cannot live a meaningful and positively impactful life. There must be a strong fulcrum on which the lever (decisions and choices) of your life revolve. There must be a limit to compromise and complaisance.

So far, we have established the fact that for anyone to live a positively impactful life, they must hold unto some strong conviction. And that such conviction must be demonstrated through their willingness to know, stand for and defend the truth, the way of life of where they've found themselves, and so be able to sustain their life and that of the society, and or structure they represent. But is it even possible to know right and wrong in this day and age of relativism? Is it possible to know good from evil? Of course it is. Some things are absolutely right. Some things are absolutely wrong.

Now the next huddle is how do we know this Truth, and the Way, and be able to defend them and so sustain life? The answer to this lies in the understanding that the life we live is not our own and so offers no guarantees that we control. Whether you believe the Bible or not, the mere fact that we die, confirms this indisputable fact. And so, to build and sustain any society, and or, structure, we must be physically alive and active and to do so, is solely dependent on the mercy of God, who is the creator and preserver of all life. Therefore the ability to know and defend the Way and Truth of Life, which alone can build a peaceful and positively impactful society, structure, and life, can only come from God who has continued to provide such knowledge from the creation of the word. As we read "In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe." (Hebrews 1:1-2 NIV). And one of the things The Son tells us is "...***If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.***" (John 8:31-32 NIV). And finally He says "***I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.***" (John 14:6 NIV). "***The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.***" (John 10:10 NIV).

So people of God, and all who are and would be under our voice through all media outlets, to live a life of conviction, that would lead us to know, stand for, and be ready to defend the truth, and way, of every structure we find ourselves in, thereby living a positively impactful life, we must surrender to Him who alone is The Way, The Truth, and the Life. For a better understanding of this, let's get back to our theme text. "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain." (Philippians 1:21 NIV).

"For to me,"

Paul knows theology: He knows the conceptual truths about God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and cosmic reality. But for Paul, all of it is personal. The idea is "Whatever life may be to others, to me...Others may make whatever choices they choose to, but I am making mine based on my personal conviction. Others may make choice between life and death. I gladly accept either alternative. If I live, my life is one with Christ: if I die, my death is gain to me. With this phrase, Paul is saying "I can't speak for you but I can speak for myself." He is being very personal. Paul's statement is similar to our common expression "As far as I am concerned"

It is true that we live in families, communities and larger societies, but every individual is responsible for his or her actions. Yes we may be operating in structures and groups that may involve others, we still remain individually accountable for whatever actions we take, even on behalf of the structure or group. Though the Christian faith is communal, its adherence and practice is based on individual conviction. Victorious Christianity is personal, "to me." It is something practical, "to live." It is also possible, "is Christ.

“to live is Christ...” To live Christ -- This is the literal rendering, for the Greek has no verbs for "is" which makes the statement even more dramatic. The present tense could be paraphrased "to go on living," (our never-failing life.), signifying "the process, not the principle, of life." Paul had no thought of life apart from Christ and so we see in a nutshell Paul's chief end for living! It was not living for money, fame or pleasure. In other words, to be a man of convictions means, to borrow biblical-theological language, to become a "sign of contradiction," the rise and fall of many. To be a man of convictions is to embrace the contradiction posed by the cross, once seen as an instrument of torture and death, and now the instrument of our salvation. To be a man of convictions means to embrace the destiny of Christ and to live the challenge of the gospel paradox, "If anyone wishes to be first, he shall be the last of all and the servant of all. **“WHAT ARE YOU LIVING FOR? ARE YOU LIVING FOR TIME OR FOR ETERNITY?** You answer will determine the direction of your life. If you are living for the wrong purpose, your direction will be wrong. If your purpose is vague or fuzzy, your direction will be fuzzy. If you don't know your purpose, you'll just be swept along by the currents of our age, doing what seems to bring you happiness, believing many truths, and following many ways, and so lose direction for your life. It is crucial that you be clear and correct in answering the question, "What are you living for?"

We must be addicted to the presence of Christ. Desperately dependent upon the power of Christ. Utterly abandoned to the program of Christ and Passionately jealous for the person of Christ. We must live in Christ ... for Christ ... by Christ ... through Christ ... and from Christ. He is the beginning, the middle and the end of life. He is truly the Alpha and Omega, the A and Z, the "a" na "ny" and every letter in between. Here are three statements to ponder: Christ is life. Christ transforms life. Christ transcends life.

“...and to die is gain.” How close life and death are! In this verse there is only a comma between them, and every one of us stands where that comma stands, between life and death. Life is the vestibule of death, and death is close on the heels of life. The systole and diastole; the throb and beat of the pulse; the swing of the pendulum this way or that! To the Apostle Paul, death was not a darksome passageway, where all our treasures rot away in a swift corruption; it was a place of gracious transition, 'a covered way that leadeth into light." We have a purpose for living and that purpose is to glorify Christ and live for Him, not money, not self, not glory or fame.

The word "gain" can be translated "profit." It suggests the idea of setting loose the moorings to set sail at sea. Paul was saying, "I am ready to go at any time"

Until we are ready to die, we won't be ready to live. The world sees death as the "end" as loss of all for which one has lived (and if they have lived totally for the temporal, it is indeed totally lost). Paul says not so for believers, whose loss is their gain. What a paradox. This sounds

like utter foolishness to the world. Indeed, Paul explains that "a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised." (1 Cor 2:14)

Did you catch what Paul is saying when he says "to die is gain"? It is easy to miss it! Paul goes on to state that death is THE ENTRANCE to "gain," NOT the exit from living. Sadly, most of us see it as the latter, as what we are losing or leaving behind and not what we are gaining. But Once you realize that your life won't last forever, you are free to invest it in a cause greater than yourself. You give up what you can't keep so that in the end you gain what you can never lose.

IF YOU LIVE ON EARTH WITHOUT PLAN OF WHAT HAPPENS AFTER DEATH, THEN YOUR LIFE WOULD HAVE BEEN WAISTED. A LIFE WITHOUT AN AFTER DEATH PLAN IS A TOTAL FAILURE.

IMPLICATIONS OF OUR THEME

To Church Leaders

The responsibility of creating the environment for Christians to stand for, and strongly defend, the Christian faith is squarely that of the church leaders. Incidentally, our nation Nigeria in particular and the larger society are not in short supply of these leaders. Ironically though, the Christian faith continues to be mostly compromised and embarrassed, a situation occasioned by the inability of most of the leaders to strongly stand for and defend the faith themselves. Quest for power and source of livelihood in the land, coupled with gross materialistic tendency, have imposed on the church, leaders whose "destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame." Whose "mind is set on earthly things." And these fair whether leaders have succeeded in producing what we call microwave Christians. People who don't have any atom of patience, even to serve God with a five minute clap offering without expecting never had before miracles and breakthroughs. People who are ready to trade their place in the kingdom of God for the cheapest plate of porridge. Christians ready to compromise their faith for little or even no provocation.

To these church leaders, this synod calls you to have a rethink, reminding you that any life without a conviction to die for is a total loss. In the context, "to live is Christ" surely means that for Paul to keep on living here means ministry. Therefor for every leader of the church, our ministry must be Christ-centered, Christ-empowered, seeking Christ's presence at all times.. There must be a big difference between our approach to material and power acquisition and those of the world. We must be willing to sacrifice all, including our life if need be, in defense of the gospel and the life of the church. We must know though, that this is an individual call and decision to make. About twenty years ago, the Episcopal Church USA, (the American version of the Anglican Communion), chose to deviate from the tradition and teachings of the Bible, in matters of human sexuality. Before then, the American and the Nigerian churches were engaged in several missionary partnerships, the break from which may put serious financial and material burden on the Nigerian church. But, In defense of the truth of the tradition and teachings of the Bible, the church of Nigeria, spearheaded by her leadership, broke communion with American church and further went ahead to make her stand known to every other part of the church. Today, the church has not suffered any set

back resulting from that bold step. Rather, it can be argued that, she has broken many new grounds in her missionary expeditions. We cannot begin to live until we are ready to die. On individual capacity, the afore mentioned decision of the church of Nigeria put all the Nigerian born Priests in a sweet and bitter situation owing to individual choices. Those who would choose to side with church of Nigeria run the risk of serious financial crunch that may have some devastating consequences on them and their families. On the other hand, those who stand with the American church have some sumptuous financial porridge to be placed on their table. Now remember, this is America with dollars versus Nigerians with families and numerous mouths to feed back home in Nigeria. As would be expected, many followed the Broadway and stayed with the American church, with some politically correct arguments and stomach oriented theological renditions to back their actions. Very few chose to stand with, (The Way and The Truth), church of Nigeria. One of those is a young priest living in Oklahoma City of Oklahoma state, serving in the Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma. Against all odds, and with full understanding of the financial consequences of his action to him and his family, even in Nigeria, he voluntarily wrote the bishop of the diocese of Oklahoma, resigning from the services of the Diocese. In his letter, he clearly stated his reason for resigning as “in obedience to the word of God, and in solidarity with the church of Nigeria...”. That young man is the present Bishop of the Diocese of Aba Ngwa North and the President of this synod. We must live a life of conviction.

We must be ready to die, that we may begin to live. For we can really live when we're ready to die. Are You Ready to Die?

To all Christians

The way to ascertain the real excellence of religion, is to see what it can do for us in the hour of trial, when all other helps and comforts fail us. If it can support us then, and make us to triumph over all the feelings of nature, its power must be confessed to be exceedingly great and highly beneficial. Christians, we cannot be ambivalent when it comes to our faith. We must choose. We cannot be but persons of convictions. Our lives must ultimately lead to the contradiction of the cross. Conflict is inevitable for those who stand for Truth against the forces that lie. They will receive derision, hatred, condemnation from those who are blinded to the Truth but they will also be a source of inspiration to those who are prepared to see and listen to the voice of reason. To this world, Christians' announcement of the Truth of Gospel must be courageous, clear, consistent, constant and quite often a sign of contradiction. Christians are not deluded by some romanticised attachment to the past, neither are they stubbornly stuck to a position which is out of touch with the world. Christians are rooted in reality, the reality of the cross. This is the lot of Christians, we can do no other, we can be no other. Sometimes, the fear and pain of conflict and persecution becomes unbearable and we are tempted once again to choose the false peace of compromise over Christ. But our hope comes in knowing that where things seem impossible for men, all things are possible for God. Love is stronger than hate. Truth is stronger than lies. The Christian life is not a principle, not a plan, not even any person, but the Person named "Jesus". Christianity is not getting us into heaven but getting heaven into us.

It is sad to see so many people unwilling to die for anything, as though their life won't include death at some point. They'd rather live for nothing, than die for something. A martyr on the hand is someone who refuses to change their beliefs even when confronted or threatened with death as the consequence of not changing their belief to suit their oppressor's and through a strong will to die with a sense of dignity and thus giving their beliefs more strength and conviction in the eyes of others. As much as we live the "abundant life" (Jn 10:10) of Christ in this world, it simply pales in comparison to what is to come for the believer upon death, and later at the resurrection of the dead and the judgment. No Christian should ever fear death, but rather should welcome it. For when a Christian dies, he has just begun to live. "If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied" (1 Cor 15:19). We are not ready to live until we are ready to die.

To Our Political Leaders

The words or phrase "political leadership" is one thing I find very difficult and so very reluctant to associate our nation Nigeria with. The simple reason is that there is nothing in the management and governance of Nigeria that prepares her to have political leaders, little wonder why we don't have any. I hope you heard me? We don't have political leaders in Nigeria and so little wonder why we are the way we are. If you would recall, we've said earlier that for any society or structure to be positively impactful it must be built on a philosophy (Truth), and Modus Operandi (Way of doing things), which are convictions which when defended assure the sustenance (Life) of the society or structure. So for their to be political leaders in any society, there must be a political structure which must include political entities—Groups/Parties /organizations/etc. An good look at the political structure of our nation shows that no political parties/ groups/ organizations, exist. But I know you are asking how true this could be since we have ... (go ahead and name those groups). But you know what, if the truth be told, none of those groups you just mentioned qualifies as a politically viable organization/ party because none has neither a philosophy nor modus Operandi and that's why they keep on metamorphosing. This year one has a name of five words, the next year it changes her name just by adding a word or two before or after the previous one. Let's compare our "political organizations with those of major democracies of the world.

The United Kingdom.

Party	Date Of Foundation	Political Position	Ideology
Conservative and Unionist Party	1834 (1678 as Tory Party)	Centre-right	Conservatism Economic liberalism British ...
Labour Party Co-operative Party	1900 1917 (Co-operative)	Centre-left	Social democracy Democratic socialism
Scottish National Party	1934	Centre-left	Scottish nationalism Scottish ...
Liberal Democrats	1988 (1859 as Liberal Party) (1678 as ...	Centre to centre-left	Liberalism Social liberalism ...

The United States

Active parties		
Major parties		
Party	Year Founded	Ideology
Democratic Party	1828	Modern liberalism
Republican Party	1854	Conservatism

Now these political parties don't just claim to have Ideologies or convictions. They are all that each one of them emphasizes. All their policies, programs, debates, and campaigns are based on these convictions. So also are those of each of their leaders and members. I will leave you to make comparison between what we just said and what obtains in our national politics.

To further prove our postulation, why do you think our so called political leaders jump from one group to the other without any shame or feel of embarrassment? It's simply because they know that not only do these groups have no convictions to defend, they themselves have no clue of what it means to have and live for a conviction. No philosophy of life and no defined way of doing anything. They seem only driven by selfish interests—What will get me where I want to be, when I want to be it, and be able to acquire what material possessions I want, no matter how they come. The economic, security, social, and infrastructural situations in today's Nigeria clearly show that the welfare of the citizens is nowhere in the agenda of those who have hijacked the leadership of our nation. And so little wonder there's untold and never seen before hardship across the land resulting to an extravaganza of agitations.

What else can we say about this nation? The only thing that works in today's Nigeria is the self-serving and anti-citizenry, local, state, and national government.

A sixty one year old man with a wife and children who has no investment but continues to sell off his inheritance while using his children as collateral to borrow to sustain personal habits must be stopped by his children before he kills himself and leave them fatherless and hopeless. We run the most hopeless education system in the whole word. We send our children to school and immediately teach them that cheating and fraud is the only way to excel by encouraging all our government schools to become 'miracle centers'. Every year we turn out hundreds of thousands of young school leavers who come out of our schools far worse in learning and character than they were before their first day in school. Our infrastructural situation is such an embarrassment that it makes Nigeria citizens wonder how much worse hell could be. All the regional and other nations of the world who Nigeria helped to stand and

survive, find it difficult today to pull us out of the pit we buried ourselves in. We have become a mockery regionally and internationally. As we should agree, the lamentation over the woes of Nigeria can never be exhausted in one synod session.

We just want to remind our national and local leaders that any man or woman who holds no conviction that he/she is ready to die for cannot live a meaningful and positively impactful life. Each one of you must be reminded that this life is a journey that must end one day. As you discharge your functions as a “political leader” look back and look for those who were there two or three decades ago. For those of you who are Christians, remember that your performance can be a turning point as to how people view the church and her mission.

WHAT ARE YOU LIVING FOR?" ARE YOU LIVING FOR TIME OR FOR ETERNITY?

Are you ready to put your political ambitions on line for the good of the people you claim to govern or represent? Are you ready to die? Remember, it doesn't matter what life is for others. Or what your colleagues do, you must as an individual seek for and receive the new life found only in Jesus. All our leaders at all levels must consider the phrase “to live is Christ.” What does it mean? To every “public office holder in Nigeria, we must make Christ the essence of our life, the model of our life, the aim of our life, the solace of our life, and the reward of our life. For it is only in Him that we have the hope to continue to live after death. For If only for this life we have hope we are of all people most miserable. For what shall it profit a man to immerse all the wealth and lose his life? **IF YOU LIVE ON EARTH WITHOUT PLAN OF WHAT HAPPENS AFTER DEATH, THEN YOUR LIFE WOULD HAVE BEEN WAISTED.**

To fellow Nigerians

Let us stop providing the fuel and firewood with which we continue to be roasted. Time is overdue for us to hold our leaders at all levels accountable and responsible. We must stop praising mediocrity and ungodliness being exhibited by our leaders. The commonwealth of Nigeria is for each and every one of us. So we must not sit down, fold our hands and watch a decimal minority continue to exploit us only for us to ask for peanut compensation and consideration. The level of insecurity and infrastructural decay in our land is not even to be expected among animals in the forest. The news of killings and destruction in Nigeria should get the attention of all of us. Now, talking about agitations, there's absolutely nothing wrong in a group of people asking for their rights, even for the right to self-actualization. There's nothing wrong in a people in a relationship asking for a peaceful appraisal of the relationship and seeking for some adjustments in the modus Operandi of the relationship. I have a serious problem though, with the situation of the agitations going on in Nigeria. In a political system where each geo-political area should have a representation at the national leadership structure, how come only those being represented complain of marginalization?. Certain areas are systematically humiliated economically, socially, structurally, and now physically destroyed, still the National Assemblies go on without any agitations from those representing these affected areas? Why have there not been any consultations or meetings between these representatives and their constituencies over such serious issues as the careless and consistent killings and destruction of lives and properties?. Why have our national representatives kept quiet and allow us to take

actions they should have taken on our behalf, knowing that our doing so would earn us a name and title that could bring more harm on us?

We must find more godly, peaceful, lawful, but consistent and rugged ways of settling scores with our fellow compatriots at the corridors of power, but we must begin from the home front.

All this said, I am personally optimistic that our best days as a nation are ahead of us as our future is His hands, who intervenes in the affairs of men, even Jesus the Christ our Lord.

Our Charge

“If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied” (1 Cor. 15:19). “What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?”(Matthew 16:26 NIV).

For every life and every human endeavor to be fruitful and successful, such must be purpose driven with a strongly held conviction. Any man or woman who holds no conviction that he/she is ready to die for cannot live a meaningful and positively impactful life. So we charge all members of our Dioceses in particular, and all Christians, that the mere claim and confession of the Christian faith without a willingness to defend such confession in the face of trials and temptations cannot secure the needed salvation for our souls neither can it affect the needed change in the society. Until, we are ready to die to self, and worldly desires, until we are ready to live Christ in words and actions, until we are ready die, we will have no share in the life the Christ gives. To make the most of today, we must keep Christ, heaven and eternity constantly in mind because we cannot really live until we're really ready and willing to die. Remember also that heavenly-minded people like Paul are the ones who do the most earthly good. We must let the hope of eternal life propel us to live right and have the right attitude to life. To make the most of your time on earth, you must always keep heaven in mind; be ready to die. We are warned “So, because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.”(Revelation 3:16 NIV). To make the needed impact while we are alive and so secure a place for our souls in the Kingdom of God, we must be ready to die. And to do so we must be hopelessly addicted to the presence of Christ, desperately dependent upon the power of Christ, utterly abandoned to the program of Christ, and passionately jealous for the person of Christ.

ARE YOU READY TO DIE? THE SOONER YOU ARE THE BETTER FOR YOU. FOR IT IS IN DIEING THAT YOU CAN GAIN LIFE, EVEN LIFE EVERLASTING. FOR A LIFE WITHOUT AN AFTER DEATH PLAN IS A TOTAL LOSS.

- I. Faith of our fathers, living still
In spite of dungeon, fire and sword,
O how our hearts beat high with joy
Whene'er we hear that glorious word!
Faith of our fathers! holy faith!
We will be true to thee till death!

2. Our fathers, chained in prisons dark,
Were still in heart and conscience free;
And blest would be their children's fate,
If they, like them should die for thee:
Faith of our fathers! holy faith!
We will be true to thee till death!

3. Faith of our fathers, we will strive
To win all nations unto thee;
And through the truth that comes from God
Mankind shall then indeed be free.
Faith of our fathers! holy faith!
We will be true to thee till death!

4. Faith of our fathers, we will love
Both friend and foe in all our strife,
And preach thee, too, as love knows how
By kindly words and virtuous life.
Faith of our fathers! holy faith!
We will be true to thee till death. Amen

And to Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you faultless before His throne; to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be all honor, glory and dominion now till the end of the age. Amen.

Thanks a lot for patiently listening,

Your Brother, and Bishop

†NATH, ABA NGWA NORTH