



Rt. Rev. Olubunmi A. Akinlade B.Sc., Dip. Th.

Diocesan Bishop

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS 2020

GREETINGS

Mama Ife, my lord the Chancellor of our diocese, (Registrar and other Legal Luminaries, other Diocesan Officials), the Clergy and Clergy Wives, Synod delegates. I bid you welcome to the 2020 synod of our great Diocese.

INTRODUCTION

This year has been a remarkable year, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected our activities for the year. This synod has been compressed to a one-day event and the number of attendees reduced in a bid to comply with government regulations guiding the COVID-19 pandemic.

OUR RESOURCE PERSONS

We want to appreciate our resource persons chosen only within the Diocese. At the communion service this morning, The Venerable Dele Adeyemi celebrated while The Rev. Canon Olalere Ojo-Borisade preached. Tomorrow, the Dean Very Rev. Samson Awoyode will Cantor while I will preach at the thanksgiving service. We want to thank everyone of them, and others involved in the conduct of services profusely for the efforts they have put into the preparations. God will honour you all in Jesus name. The detailed profiles of our resource persons are listed in Appendix A.

SINCE SYNOD 2019

1. MISSIONS

We were able to embark on the following mission related programs despite the challenges posed by COVID-19 pandemic.

a. Rural Mission

I was able to visit some of our rural churches during the reporting period. Also, in the month of March, all the clergy in the diocese kept residence in our various rural churches for a week during the Diocesan Mission week.

b. Church Planting

The churches recently planted are still being nourished by the various archdeaconries. We hope to start integrating them with other churches in the diocese very soon.

c. Rebuilding Rural Churches

A few days ago, we just dedicated the new church building built at St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Atowo and St. John's Anglican Church, Amokegun in Oyere Archdeaconry.

d. Radio Services

When the lock down occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic started, the diocese initiated a 30 minutes Sunday worship service on Crown FM at 9.30 am (English) and Orisun FM at 10.00 am (Yoruba). The response we received from these services has been very encouraging. We have just started a 30 minutes Bible Study on radio on Sundays Crown FM 5.00 pm (English) and Orisun FM 6.00 pm. During this new program, listeners are encouraged to send in their questions via WhatsApp and such questions are treated and sent back to the inquirer promptly.

2. BLOCK INDUSTRY

The block industry has started production again. They are currently moulding blocks at Asipa for the construction work going on there. We are yet to start production at the permanent site in Alaoko due to logistic reasons.

3. COMPUTERISATION PROJECT

The second phase of this project which involves migrating to the Cloud based version of the ShelbyNext Financials Church Management system has commenced. We have fully implemented the General Ledger, Accounts Payable and Remittances module. We are currently working on the payroll and fixed asset module.

A Mobile App version for our Clergy Directory has been launched. Some of our sister dioceses have adopted this platform for their own clergy directory. You can download the App on the Google Play Store searching for the name 'Directory of Ife' and when prompted register for a token fee of N500.00.

4. CROWD FUNDING

The Crowdfunding initiative of the diocesan board is still on despite low patronage from individuals. We very much appreciate a family that God knows who have contributed largely to the fund. The contribution came from their children home and abroad. The Lord will enlarge their purse and

replenish them. The designated account for this project is – Diocese of Ife Crowdfunding, Zenith Bank Account number 1015670471. This money will not be touched within an initial period of three years.

5. MARCEDONIAN FUND

Following the challenges faced by the diocese because of the COVID-19 pandemic, IFE Sons and Daughters home and abroad took up a challenge to raise a substantial amount for the diocese to cushion the effect of the period. We very much appreciate the initiative led by Professor Gabriel Olawoyin and his team. The designated account for this project is – Diocese of Ife Macedonian Fund, Zenith Bank Account number 1017306826

6. DIVINE ROYAL COLLEGE

The school continues to make steady progress. It recorded 100 percent in the JSSCE. The first set of the SS3 students sat for the WASC and NECO examinations. The results so far released at the time of writing this address were encouraging. We look towards improved students' enrolment by the next academic session. To achieve this students' enrolment drive, the Diocesan Board took a decision that churches are mandated to send and sponsor students to the school from this academic year. Also, one Sunday every month is to be set aside across the parishes to take collections to support the School.

OUR MEN

We are happy to report that the idea of starting a formidable Men's fellowship in this diocese has made a deal of progress with all the groundwork of defining the structure, syllabus and choosing leaders at the various levels all in place. We are currently working on the curriculum for each group within the fellowship. A day for formal inauguration will be announced once the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions are eased.

WOMEN AND GIRLS ORGANIZATION

We thank God for the work of the women in this diocese under the able leadership of their president Mrs. Nkechi Akinlade. During the year under review, most of their programmes were held despite the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Highlights from the various Units

a. **Action & Outreach Unit**

This unit held a total of four (4) successful programmes in the year. The programmes included Visitation to Prison, Essay Competitions, Widows and Widowers' Seminar and Visitation to the Orphanage Homes.

b. **Mothers' Union unit**

All members of the Mothers' Union gathered to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Saviour on December 3, 2019 at the Diocesan Camp, Asipa. It was a fun filled experience as each archdeaconry made presentations, and at the end, a love feast was celebrated. Thankfully, their rededication service also held in our various parishes at the beginning of the year.

c. **Marketing & Sales Unit**

This unit continues to make items available for sales at various diocesan programmes all in a bid to raise funds for the organization.

d. **Girls'/Ladies' Guild Unit**

Their rededication service as well as the Valentine programme with the theme "**Designer's Original**" held earlier in the year.

e. **The Publication Unit**

The annual inspirational magazine, Ile-Ayo, with theme "**where are you?**" was launched at the last Women Organisations' conference held at St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Eleyele. It featured several articles as well as an Exclusive Interview with Chief Princess Emily Teniade Ogunsakin.

f. **Trainers' Workshop**

The year 2020 Trainers' workshop was held in the various zones and it was tagged "**Every wise woman builds her home**". Trainers from all archdeaconries were trained on how to make Bar soap and Detergent.

g. **Diocesan Clergy Wives**

This fellowship was only able to hold the 1st quarterly meeting as well as the residential Annual Clergy Wives School which was indeed a great success. The theme for the school was "Occupy till I come" –Luke 19: 13 and it took place at the Asipa camp on June 26-27, 2020.

Women Organisations' Projects

Oyere Farm Project

There has been a lull in the progress at the farm as the payments of tenant's dues have been pending for a while.

Women Organisations' Multipurpose Centre at Arubidi

God has been faithful with his provisions for the construction of the Women's Multipurpose Centre, Arubidi. Work has continued in earnest and presently the doors are being fixed, the internal wiring and cabling as well as plumbing works are also being done. The fencing of the premises is also on going.

OSUN STATE

We bless the name of the Lord for the peace we are enjoying in this state under the leadership of Alhaji Adegboyega Oyetola the governor of the state and his team. We want to appreciate the governor for his timely payment of salaries and maintenance of infrastructures in the state. Worthy of commendation is the action of the government during the COVID-19 pandemic that led to total lockdown of the state. We thank God for taking absolute control over the pandemic while we commend the Government for coming up with palliative to assist the citizen of the state during the period.

We use this medium to appeal to the Government to see to the payment of the back log of salaries owed workers by the immediate past government and the payment of pension and gratuity of many retired Civil Servants in the state who are daily approaching churches for assistance.

We pray the good Lord will continue to uphold our governor and the entire Osun State.

STATE OF OUR NATION - NIGERIA

Agur, the son of Jakeh in the bible, a man reportedly much like Job who in his understanding of the frailty of human strength and the ultimate dependence on the One True God reflected and asked of God in Proverb 30 v.7-9: ***'Two things I request of You. (Deprive me not before I die): Remove falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches – Feed me with the food allotted to me; Lest I be full and deny You, And say, "Who is the Lord?" Or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God'***.

Searching through the length and breadth of this nation, hardly would one find a person or persons who have close affinity with the reflection of Agur. Unlike Agur, falsehood and lies we all prefer as dishonesty is a virtue for us. We would sooner deny and say out loudly 'Who is the Lord' if we cannot get our way and willingly steal and profane the name of The Lord than be out of pocket and powerless. The spirit of the Lord is an alien in the life of many inhabitants of this expectedly great nation. Otherwise how do you explain the level of corruption and the wanton destruction of lives and properties?

Money and power are the idols that we have preferred to worship instead of The Almighty Father. Every other person wants to make money through any means.

Even when the government sees the light and tries to do the right thing, the multitude are looking for ways to cheat the system. The various governments have elevated corruption to an art form and the followers seem to have mastered the art even better than the government. The bible has continually warned in Jeremiah 17 v. 11, '**As a partridge that broods but does not hatch, so is he who get riches, but not by right; It will leave him in the midst of his days, And at his end he will be a fool**'.

A good life is not necessarily that which is full of riches. Contentment, it has been said, is the answer to life. He who has God in his/her life has more than enough. As Jesus counselled in Luke 12 v.27, '**Consider the lilies...they neither toil nor spin; and yet even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these**'. God knows what one needs, and He is able and ready to provide. If we however put our trust on our own power or riches, we then become like that old fool in the bible who thought his powers provided the bountiful harvest he had but whose soul was required of him that same night. Righteousness, the bible says, exalts a nation.

What is happening in the country today is heart-rending and we call on democrats, government, and other stakeholders to save Nigeria. This is not the Nigeria of our dream. None of us would have thought that Nigeria would turn to what it is today. The younger generation may not fully understand what is going on, we must do everything within our power to save this country.

EVENTS SINCE 2019 SYNOD

DEDICATIONS

- 13th Oct., 2019** Dedication of Church of the Ascension Vicarage, Modomo, Ile Ife
- 30th Dec., 2019** Dedication of Claudius Adedini Layade Memorial Anglican Church Ara Omikorede Layade, Ile Ife
- 26th July, 2020** Dedication of Oba Olubuse Memorial Anglican Church Building at Ifewara road, Ile Ife.
- 15th Sept, 2020** Dedication of new church buildings at St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Atowo and St. John's Ang. Church, Amokegun

CONFIRMATION

- 13th Oct., 2019** Confirmation Service of Ilare Archdeaconry held at All Souls Ang. Church Opa
- 13th Oct., 2019** Confirmation Service of Moro Archdeaconry held at St. Joseph of Nazareth Ang. Church, Moro
- 19th Oct., 2019** Confirmation Service held at Christ Anglican Church Waasimi, Ipetumodu.

INVESTITURES, ORDINATION, AND INSTALLATION

- 28th Sept.,2019** Investiture of Chiefs held at The Holy Trinity Anglican Church Ife City, Ile Ife.
- 9th Nov., 2019** Investiture of Chiefs held at Our Saviour's Ang. Church Iloro, Ile Ife
- 9th Nov., 2019** Collation of Archdeacons held at All Souls Ang. Church Opa, Ile Ife
- 16th Nov., 2019** Investiture of Chiefs held at Christ Anglican Church Osi-Sooko
- 23rd Nov., 2019** Investiture of Chiefs held at St. Paul's Ang. Church Baakun, Ipetumodu
- 30th Nov., 2019** Investiture of Chiefs held at St. John's Ang. Church Yakooyo
- 18th Jan., 2020** Investiture of Chiefs held at St. Stephen's Ang. Church Akinlalu

CONFERENCES AND RETREATS

- 24th – 27th Oct., 2019** Diocesan Women Conference held at St. Matthew's Ang. Church Eleyele, Ile Ife

- 19th Feb., 2020** Pre-lenten Retreat held at Oba Olubuse Memorial Anglican Church Ifewara road, Ile Ife
- 26th – 27th June, 2020** Clergy wives' school held at the Diocesan camp Asipa.

EPISCOPAL SERVICES

- 21st Oct., 2019** Ife Diocesan Harvest held at All Saint Anglican Church, Yaba, Lagos
- 25th Dec., 2019** Christmas service held at the Cathedral Church of St. Philip Ayetoro, Ile Ife.
- 19th Jan., 2020** Diocesan Women Guild & Women Executive Rededication held at St. Peter's Ang. Church Iremo

OTHER EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- 29th Sept., 2019** 30th Anniversary of St. Matthew's Anglican Church Eleyele, Ile Ife.
- 23rd Nov., 2019** Applaud 2019, held at Oduduwa hall, O.A.U., Ile Ife.
- 6th Dec., 2019** Diocesan Board Meeting held at the Bishop's Court, Parakin, Ile Ife
- 17th Dec., 2019** Diocesan Christmas Carol held at St. Barnabas Ang. Church Olonade, Ile Ife
- 18th Dec., 2019** Clergy and Wives Christmas Party with Baba and Mama Ife held at the Diocesan camp, Asipa
- 21st Dec., 2019** 2019 Carnival for Christ held at Alaoko, Ile-Ife
- 11th Jan., 2020** Power for the year held at the Cathedral Church of St. Philip, Ayetoro, Ile-Ife
- 14th Jan., 2020** Clergy and Clergy Wives Convocation held at The Chapel of St. John the Evangelist, Oke Oloyinbo, Ile Ife.
- 14th Feb., 2020** Mama Ife (Mrs. Nkechi Akinlade) 50th Birthday held at the Cathedral Church of St. Philip Ayetoro, Ile Ife.
- 28th Feb., 2020** Diocesan Vigil held at the Cathedral Church of St. Philip Ayetoro, Ile Ife.
- 9th – 13th Mar., 2020** Diocesan Mission Week / Bishop's visitation to churches in the rural area of the diocese
- 11th June, 2020** Special Convocation Service (Baba, Mama, Clergy, Evangelists, and Wives) held at the Cathedral Church of St. Philip, Ayetoro, Ile Ife

20th Aug., 2020

Meeting of Clergy, Evangelists and Wardens with the Diocesan treasurer and the Bishop, held at the Bishop's Court parakin Ile Ife

28th Aug., 2020

Diocesan Board Meeting held at the Bishop's Court

SYNOD THEME

THE NEW NORMAL (Isaiah 43:19)

Our God spoke through prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 43:18-19 ***'But forget all that- it is nothing compared to what I am going to do. For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it? I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland.'***

I believe God is speaking to us through what is happening in the world that we need to halt what we have become accustomed to and reflect deeply on the need to change our methods and ways.

Could all that have happened this year (COVID-19 pandemic) happen without the consent of God? I do not think so. The whole world went on holiday for months. Even the most advanced and powerful nations had to shut down. All our advanced knowledge was put to shame. Only God could have done such a thing.

I know it is a common practice to blame the Devil for everything that does not go the way we plan it in this part of the world. This time around, there is no way the Devil could pull such stunt together. Only the creator of the world could shut down His world. I heard one popular Pastor say, ***'God was angry with the world He created and has decided that everyone must go on compulsory holiday.'*** Somehow, I agree with this pastor's view.

Earlier this year in January, I met a friend of mine in Lagos and we got talking about plans for the year. He told me that he had many international trips to make this year. As at the time we spoke, he told me that he had already bought his tickets for the year and by so doing he has saved a lot of money. Little did he know that COVID-19 pandemic was going to distort all his plans. This year, the Lambeth conference of the Anglican Communion worldwide was to have taken place in July in London. It has been postponed to 2022. We, GAFCON bishops, were supposed to meet in Kigali, Rwanda in June, that also has been postponed. ***"Man proposes but God disposes" Proverb 19:21.***

How many of your plans for the year have you had to put off due to the current crisis in the world? For us in the diocese of Ife, we have had to postpone or cancel most of our major gatherings for the year. Just when we concluded plans to start a new monthly prayer gathering tagged ***'Balm of Gilead'*** every first Saturday in the month starting in April, the lockdown started March ending. We had printed and circulated posters and all preparations

had been concluded but it never took off. We were also planning to celebrate the 30th anniversary of our diocese this year, that also has been postponed till next year when we will now celebrate 31st God willing. We had to suspend clergy school, ordination, vigils etc till a time when it will be okay to gather in large numbers again. Churches did not have regular Sunday worship for three months here in Ife and five months in Lagos and other places. Up till the time of writing this address, churches are not allowed to have the usual weekday programmes. No crusade or revival, no baptism or confirmation. At a point in time, burials were only done at the graveside and you must get government permission.

When you go to a bank nowadays, you will be given a number and you will wait outside till it is your turn to go in as banking halls were also restricted to limited number of people at a time. Your waiting can be for hours. We no longer shake hands or hug people again; social distancing is the new terminology making waves around. Visitation to friends and family has been reduced to essentials.

We all read the story of a father who refused to allow his son entry into his house and he reported the son to the authorities in Ekiti state because the son travelled illegally from Lagos to Ekiti State to see him when no movement was enforced as a result of the lockdown by government. There are many more examples of strange happenings since the beginning of this year, thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Let me summarise all I have said thus far with this phase '**Welcome to the New Normal**'.

New ways of living and relating with people have emerged. For example, many people now work from home, suddenly, many big corporations are finding out that they do not need all those big offices again. Some have even moved their operations entirely online. Many students now go to school online. Most financial transactions are now done through online banking. At a time during the lockdown, shops were refusing to collect cash for fear of the virus. If you do not have ATM card you will have to endure some hardship in transacting business. Handshake has been replaced with 'shoulder bomb.' The usual greeting of peace during communion service is now done by waving hands at each other from a distance and we now wear face mask about.

The new wakeup call for many churches is that you must setup an online platform to conduct services, take offerings and other payments online as

numbers attending services physically has dropped. We now send 'Zoom' invitations to people to attend our events (church services, bible study, counselling, weddings, birthdays, funerals, etc) online. 'Zoom' is an online software application that allows many people to connect virtually and be part of an event. Interestingly, Nigerians have found a way to continue our extravagant social lifestyle despite the social distancing rule. People send 'Aso Ebi' by courier to invitees of 'zoom' events. In some cases, caterers are asked to deliver food to the houses of the invitees. This is to an online event; may God help us.

Our world has changed, and the change is coming so fast that if you do not key in, it will have severe consequence for you.

We have deliberately chosen our theme for this year's synod **'The New Normal'** because things are changing around us and the possibility that everything will return to normal as we used to know it is low. Our restricting Synod to a one-day event this year is part of the new normal. If it works well, why should we be having synod for four days? Why not leave it like this and save a huge amount spent on organizing synod? I will leave you all to decide. Also let me add this here, we are contemplating changing our synod date back to April/May period. What is your view on this?

God is doing a new thing. Life is worth living for those who delight in the Lord—for He promises to satisfy the desire of every heart. He transforms hopelessness into expectancy. He says, **'Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth.'** Isaiah 43:19

In Isaiah 43 where we chose the text for our synod theme, God states His intention in terms of a promise **'I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth.'** The first thing He did was to remind them of His works in the past, a) **His work of liberation:** He brought them out of Egypt, (b) **His work of preservation:** He kept them in the desert, (c) **His work of occupation:** He gave them a land that was not their own. In verse 18, our God told them **'forget all that- it is nothing compared to what I am going to do.'** There is a need for us to let go of the past. If our God who did mighty things in the past says **'do not dwell on the past'** then we need to take that message seriously. Dwelling on the past hinders growth. This is a message for our churches and for many of us who are fond of saying **'the good old days ...'** For a child of God, our best days are in the future not in the past.

Our churches are crying for changes, many of our methods are old and obsolete. When you take the bulletin of most churches, most of the weekly

programs listed are not functional yet we still list them because they make us look like a functioning church. Let me remind us that when synod started back then, vicars of churches used to come and read their report on the floor of synod. Later, that changed, with administrators of archdeaconry collating reports from churches under their archdeaconry, summarizing and presenting them to the synod. Later still, we started circulating the report ahead of synod to members to study on their own and synod groups emerged whose responsibility is to discuss reports assigned to them and recommend to the plenary. With what is happening now, can we improve on this method? Could synod groups meet ahead of synod, online and start their work to save time during synod?

We should note that in the passage where our theme was chosen from Isaiah 43, God, after reminding them of His works in the past, promised to transform the things that are present Isaiah 43:14-17. We too need to transform our current methods. In times past, family harvest was one family at a time to dance forward. Someone changed it to a few families together to save time. He met stiff opposition, but he stood his grounds. Today we have accepted it as the norm. What if we stop dancing forward altogether and the Pastor just prays for the families who in turn would send in their thanksgiving offering via online transfer?

God has promised to do new and exciting things in your life. His purpose is to bless you and others through you so that He may receive praise. But you will only know his promise and purpose if you realize your need for His Forgiveness.

Despite the lockdown we could see the hand of God working for our good. He already told us in Romans 8:28 our watchword for this year that '**And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.**' Many of us who frequent hospitals on normal occasions stayed away from them during this pandemic and God kept us in good health. Many have discovered that changing cloths like chameleon was also not necessary as we have been wearing the same cloths for months and they are still okay. Many homes are more together now because they were forced to stay at home for a long time together. I know there were challenges here and there, however, reflecting deeply in some cases, things have worked for good.

Have you sat down to think, '**what lessons has this pandemic period of lockdown taught me?**' Did I use the opportunity of the lockdown to set my priorities right? Have I drawn nearer to God this season? Do not waste a time

like this that can be termed '**Wilderness Experience.**' God said, '**I will make a pathway through the wilderness.**' We have it on record that many of the world's greatest corporations grew stronger in their time of wilderness experience. Let us look at one recently. Most people never heard of ZOOM before the pandemic. This corporation's fortune has grown so big now because everybody is using zoom to conduct online meeting since the pandemic started. One of our former governors said back then he was offered opportunity to invest in this company, but he turned it down thinking it was not worth his finances. Today, he is full of regret. Many other stories abound. What is your wilderness experience? Have you recognized the pathway God has created for you in it?

For us in the Diocese of Ife (Anglican Communion), God has clearly created pathways for us during this wilderness experience, we have had to adapt to the new reality. Things we never took seriously has become the new normal – Online services, TV and radio services, bible study on radio and via WhatsApp and other social media platforms, Zoom vigils, Zoom conferences etc are now being offered by our churches. Some churches now take offerings via online platforms. The diocese had to make appeal to people to support our radio broadcast and the response has been commendable.

As I conclude this address, let me share with you some of the things God is doing in this diocese even during this lockdown. One of our churches took God for His words during the lockdown when things were difficult, they prayed and reached out to many people. God did far more than they could ever imagine. Someone worked up to the vicar of one of our churches after he had challenged them to do something for the Lord. The person offered to singlehandedly knock down the old vicarage building and build a new one. I have laid the foundation and work has started. Sons and daughters of Ife origin of their own accord decided to raise a substantial amount of money for the diocese without being asked. We dedicated two churches in the rural areas of our diocese during this lockdown. God said, '**I will create rivers in the dry wasteland.**' May these 'Rivers' continue to flow into our dry waste land in Jesus name.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, let us continue to believe that God will do a new thing in our lives and let us remember that with Him the best is yet to come. We must always be forward looking.

+ Olugunmi, Jfe

September 2020

APPENDIX A

PROFILES OF RESOURCE PERSONS

PROFILE OF THE VEN. OLUDELE ADEYEMI
(Celebrant at the Opening Service – Thursday, 19th September 2020)

Adeyemi Oludele Adewale was born in the year 1971 in Lagos State. He hails from Akinyele Local Government in Ibadan, Oyo State.

Oludele attended Holy Trinity Primary School in Ojoo, Ibadan and finished in the year 1982. He proceeded to Mount Olivet Grammar School, Bodija, Ibadan between 1982–1987 for his secondary school education. Thereafter, he attended Osun State College of Education for his NCE programme in the year 1993. In year 1994, he gained admission to Immanuel College of Theology and Christian Education for his ministerial training (1994–1997), there he obtained a Diploma in Theology and Christian Religious Studies (Dip. Th., Dip. RS.)

He later proceeded to the University of Ado-Ekiti for his Bachelor of Arts in Christian Religious Studies and Education B.A. (Ed) in the year 1997-2000. Oludele holds a Master's degree in Education, M. Ed. from the University of Ibadan in the year 2010.

Oludele was deaconed and priested in the year 1997 and 1998 respectively, by The Rt. Rev. G.I.O. Olajide in the old Ibadan Diocese. In the year 2007, he was preferred a Statutory Canon, and due to the inter Diocesan transfer, he joined the Diocese of Ife on April 15th, 2011. He was preferred Statutory Canon in the year 2014 by the Rt. Rev. Oluranti Odubogun.

At the last Synod of the Diocese of Ife in the year 2019, he was preferred Venerable by the lord Bishop of Ife, the Rt. Rev. Olubunmi A. Akinlade. Oludele has served in various parishes, Archdeaconries and Cathedral. He is happily married to Mrs. Adeyemi Victoria Oluyemi.

PROFILE OF THE REV. CANON OLALERE OJO-BORISADE
(Preacher at the Opening Service – Saturday 19th September 2020)

Olalere Michael Ojo-Borisade hails from Efon-Alaaye Kingdom in Ekiti State Nigeria.

He went to St. Joseph's Primary school Efon – Alaaye and repeated Primary Six at St. Paul's Anglican Primary Efon Alaaye. As a result of his commitment in the Church, he was appointed the youth president of Efon Alaaye Archdeaconry for some years. He proceeded to Archbishop Vining College of Theology, Akure in Ondo State in the year 2002 where he bagged a diploma in Religious Studies and Diploma in Theology in the year 2005. He was made Deacon by Late Rt. Rev. Gabriel Babalola Oloniyo on June 19, 2005 and was priested on June 18, 2006.

In year 2006, he gained admission to the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife to study Religious Studies and graduated in year 2009 with a Bachelor of Arts. He also proceeded for a professional Master's in Public Administration at Obafemi Awolowo University in the year 2012 and graduated in year 2014.

Olalere has served in various stations within the Diocese of Ife. He was appointed assistant Women Organization Chaplain of the Diocese of Ife in year 2007, he also became the Women Chaplain in the year 2014 and preferred Honorary Canon the same year. He is presently the Director of Women organization in the Diocese of Ife.

Olalere is married to his heartthrob, Mrs. Tolulope Mercy Ojo –Borisade.

**PROFILE OF THE VERY REV. SAMSON AWOYODE
(Cantor at the Thanksgiving Service – Sunday 20th September 2019)**

Very Rev. Samson Adeboye Awoyode was born on the 11th of April, 1958. He attended St. Paul's Anglican Primary School, Ayelabowo Street, Ile-Ife where he obtained Primary School Leaving Certificate in year 1970. He had a short stay for one year at Oduduwa College, Ile-Ife before proceeding to Ile Anglican Grammar School, Ile-Ife, where he obtained West African School Certificate "0" & "A" levels in the year 1978.

He attended the National School of Produce Technology, Ibadan Campus where he obtained National Certificate in Produce Technology in the year 1981. He attended Immanuel College of Theology, Ibadan where he obtained Diploma in Theology in the year 2003.

While he was in the Civil service, he rose through the ranks from the post of Assistant Produce Superintendent to Chief Produce Superintendent all for 33 years before voluntarily retiring from service in the year 2012.

He was ordered Deacon in the Diocese of Ife in the year 1999, priested in the year 2000, preferred Statutory Canon (twice) 2006 and 2007, preferred Archdeacon in the year 2009 and was installed Dean of the Cathedral of St. Philip, Ayetoro, Ile-Ife on the 2nd September, 2018.

He was elected as Synod Secretary (Lay) to the synod of the Diocese of Ife in the year 1996, elected Synod Clerical Secretary in the year 2009 and finally elected Synod Secretary in the year 2018.

He served meritoriously in the Diocese of Ife as Director of the Directorate of Social Welfare; Director, Directorate of Economic Empowerment and the exalted office of the Director of Administration.

He has served in various churches in the Diocese i.e. St. Philip's Cathedral as a Deacon; St. John's Church, Yakoyo; Our Saviour's Church, Iloro, Ile-Ife; All Soul's Church Opa, Ife; St. Peter's Church, Irewo, Ife; St. Paul's Church Ayegbaju and currently serving as the Dean of the Cathedral of St. Philip, Ayetoro, Ile-Ife.

He is married to Mrs. Felicia Olutoyosi Awoyode, the marriage is blessed with four promising young children, Abiodun, Taiwo, Kehinde and Idowu.

APPENDIX B

COMMUNIQUÉ
AND
PASTORAL LETTERS
FROM

**CHURCH OF NIGERIA
(ANGLICAN COMMUNION)**



CHURCH OF NIGERIA

(Anglican Communion)

THE MOST REV'D NICHOLAS D. OKOH, MA, Fss, Mss, LLD, DD
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria

THE COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) HELD FROM 23RD -27TH SEPTEMBER, 2019, AT THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. PETER, ASABA, DELTA STATE.

INTRODUCTION

The Standing Committee of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) met at the Cathedral Church of St. Peter, Diocese of Asaba, Delta State, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and presided over by The Most Rev'd Nicholas D. Okoh, Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria. In attendance were his wife, Mrs. Nkasiobi A. Okoh, President of the Women and Girls' Organizations; the Dean of the Church of Nigeria, The Most Rev'd Dr. Ali Buba Lamido, 157 Bishops, 138 Clergymen, 90 members of the House of Laity and delegates of the Mothers' Union. We were honoured at the Opening Ceremony with the presence of some distinguished guests including the Executive Governor of Delta State, His Excellency, Senator Dr. Ifeanyi Arthur Okowa.

THEME The theme of the meeting was 'FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH [1 TIMOTHY 6:12]. At the end, the following Communique was issued:

At a time like this, when we seem to be distressed over insecurity, deterioration of our social amenities, poor medical system, weak educational system, the Standing Committee reminds all:

- That God's unconditional faithfulness is the perfect assurance that we have a future which no one or system can destroy.
- That the prevailing situation in our nation is increasingly dire and full of hate. All Nigerians are, therefore, called upon to renounce the devil and all his works, by crucifying the flesh.
- That everyone, especially Christians, must rise up and fight this fight between light and darkness, good and evil, the kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan wisely

particularly by setting good examples for those who have strayed from the straight path of godliness.

- That believers must not shy away from fighting the good fight of faith as inherited and passed on by the fore-bears of our faith.

FELICITATION

The Standing Committee heartily congratulates the Most Rev'd Henry Ndukuba- Bishop of Gombe Diocese and Archbishop of Jos Province for his successful emergence as the Primate-Elect of our Church. The Church prays that as he prepares to take over the huge task of leadership, the Almighty God will empower and strengthen him. In similar vein, the Committee appreciates the out-going Primate, the Most Rev'd D. Okoh, Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria for the developmental strides and achievements so far, and pray God to grant him the ability to finish strong in the name of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit;

Amen.

CASHLESS POLICY While appreciating the efforts of the Federal Government towards introducing a sustainable cashless policy, the Standing Committee calls for caution in its implementation in order to guard against hoarding of funds in unconventional places. It further urges our elected officials at all levels to embrace more the spirit of sacrifice and patriotism, in view of paucity of funds to finance the new minimum wage and other pressing needs of the citizens. With greater number of the citizens living below poverty level, the Government should look for better ways of sourcing or saving funds instead of worsening their lot with increase in Value Added Tax (VAT).

TRANSPORTATION The Standing Committee commends the Federal Government on the improvement on the rail system. Similar attention should be paid to other means of transportation, to improve the deplorable condition of our roads, as in fact the Government has started, and the services of the local airlines. The Federal Government is implored to assist local airlines to replace old aircraft to save the nation from avoidable air disasters. The opening of our water ways for the movement of goods and services is a need that is both urgent and compelling.

THE POWER SECTOR The Standing Committee is worried that despite all efforts and funds invested since the inception of this democratic experience in 1999, the power sector has defied solutions by successive administrations while consumers pay dearly for darkness. It prays and calls on all concerned to redouble efforts in this direction so that sooner than later, constant power supply will be available and affordable.

XENOPHOBIC ATTACKS IN SOUTH AFRICA The Church condemns the wave of Xenophobic attacks in South Africa against foreign nationals, especially Nigerians, and calls on the Government to pursue diplomatic solutions to its logical conclusion. It also urges the Government not to abandon the returnees without resettlement, and calls on Nigerians, both at home and in the Diaspora, not to take laws into our hands, by destroying establishments. It further commends the patriotic spirit of Airpeace Airline towards the rescue mission of Nigerians in Diaspora, especially on this issue. Wealthy Nigerians are accordingly urged to use their God given resources to better the lives of other Nigerians.

The absence of viable youth empowerment programmes has partly led to the migration of progressive Nigerian youths to other less endowed nations, where they are mistreated. The Government should create enabling environment for our youth to explore their potentials with zest.

EROSION OF OUR VALUES The Standing Committee wishes to register her displeasure over the sponsored promotion of social vices that are alien to our value system through electronic media through programmes like the Big Brother reality. The youths get keyed into these alien sexual cultures capable of causing unmanageable social crises and devalue human dignity. We strongly urge multinational corporations and other sponsors of such immoral programmes to divert their resources to more productive and educative programmes towards raising good, visionary and patriotic future leaders.

SECURITY The Standing Committee notes the pain, suffering and hardship

inflicted on citizens as a result of insecurity in the land. More painful is that some privileged Nigerians have turned this regrettable situation into business, defrauding international organizations in the name of NGOs, and diverting funds and materials meant for IDPs. While commending the Federal Government for the efforts made so far in the fight against insecurity, we urge that the fight should also be directed against the sponsors of this heinous crime against humanity no matter who they are.

UNITY IN DIVERSITY The Church strongly believes that the beauty of Nigeria lies in its ethnic and cultural diversities. These should naturally be tools for progress and development. The present trend of exploiting and misusing them for selfish gains should not only be discouraged but also condemned in its entirety. Appropriate Government structure that guarantees justice, equity, honesty and fair play will give us a head start for the desired peace, progress and development. The thriving democracy and development in climes like United States should encourage us employ our diversity rightly.

ACQUISITION OF SEVEN KILOMETRES OF WATER WAYS The plan by the Federal Government to acquire seven kilometers of land bordering water ways across the country is fueling a lot of suspicion and apprehension in the society. While thanking the 8th

National Assembly for rejecting the Executive Bill on this issue, the Standing Committee calls on the 9th National Assembly to be on the watch out for any move to reintroduce it for passage into law. At this stage, of our national development, we should avoid anything capable of upsetting the polity and emphasis what makes for peace and build up our common life. We commend the wisdom and grace that led to the suspension of the infamous RUGA project and calls for its total abrogation in whatever form or guise.

FREEDOM OF WORSHIP Concerned with the plight of Christians, who are suffering at the hands of Islamic extremists in Nigeria and around the world, the Standing Committee urges all Christians to pray faithfully for God’s grace and protection for those who are persecuted. It further calls on all tiers of government to ensure freedom of worship and where necessary, the protection of Christians who are under pressure around the world, particularly in Nigeria. The Standing Committee hereby requests that Government application of policies/laws on the right to own land should be without bias. It should not be designed or seen to favour any religion or group in the country.

JUDICIARY The Standing Committee wishes to express deep concern that the Judiciary is still financially dependent on the Executive. The Federal Government of Nigeria need to realize that the judiciary is an independent Arm and should be allowed to carry out their postings and promotions without interference. An empirical financial autonomy that will enable it function progressively is, therefore, seriously solicited.

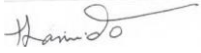
CONVOCATION OF ANGLICANS IN NORTH AMERICA (CANA) In April of this year 2019, CANA came solely under the control and jurisdiction of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). Despite the fact that this decision led to the exit of the Diocese of CANA East to join the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), it is our sincere desire to forge ahead and maintain a good relationship with ACNA as they are our brothers and sisters in defense of the faith. We are committed to fulfilling our mission of reaching the host in North America. The Standing Committee congratulates Bishop Felix Orji on his appointment by the Primate of All Nigeria as Missionary Bishop of CANA, trusting God to guide him as he leads CANA in the USA and CANADA.

CONCLUSION Finally, brothers and sisters, we urge you to fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art so called and has professed a good profession before many witnesses. (1 Tim 6.12)



Ven. Dr. G. Paul Dajur,

General Secretary, Church of Nigeria,



The Most Rev'd Dr. A. B. Lamido,

Dean, Church of Nigeria.



The Most Rev'd Dr. Nicholas D. Okoh

Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria



CHURCH OF NIGERIA **(Anglican Communion)**

THE MOST REV'D NICHOLAS D. OKOH, MA, Fss, Mss, LLD, DD
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria

PASTORAL LETTER FROM THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) HELD FROM MONDAY, 23rd TO FRIDAY, 27th SEPTEMBER, 2019, AT THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST PETER, IN THE DIOCESE OF ASABA, DELTA STATE

We equally use this opportunity to call for consistent prayers over the state of our nation, for God's divine intervention at all levels of our national life, especially for those who are suffering for the faith. As we pray, the need to cushion the effects on our members cannot be over emphasized.

We shall continue with our tradition of making contributions towards Relief Funds, St. Matthias' Day Collections, Advent Collections, Ajayi Crowther Projects and GAFCON Support. This is important as we work together as a Church to impact our people positively. We commend those who have responded well, and appeal for better performance. We are pleased to inform you that the Standing Committee has graciously institutionalized the Advent Collection as a way of having ready funds to pursue our common cause. We encourage you to be steadfast in your support to the growth and stability of our Church.

Beloved, we have observed carefully the ugly situation of co-habitation among the youth. This has become a major challenge to recognized marital life, and we condemn this sin of cohabitation without being lawfully married.

We should be mindful to check the activities of some diabolic cultures in our communities in order to secure the future of our children and young people. Similarly, we are deeply concerned about the manifest satanic activities through electronic and other social media platforms.

We note in particular the subtle damage which The Big Brother Reality Show causes to our moral values. We call on all members of our church to be reawakened and stand up to this raging battle between light and darkness. As a church we should commit the youth and children ministries to people who have been trained in the way of the Lord (Prov. 22:6), and insist on discipleship as an antidote to these vices.

We are grateful to God for His faithfulness in the blessings of the Divine Commonwealth Conference (DIVCCON). We are confident that the 2019 edition slated for Monday, 11th - Friday, 15th November, will surely be spiritually rewarding. We expect a greater attendance and participation.

As we engage ourselves meaningfully to establish the kingdom of God among men, efforts must be made to remove issues that will not help our growth. The challenge of ethnicity in our communion is a major hindrance to the unity and growth of our Church. We must be reminded that in Christ we are one. Any good fight of faith that leaves you more a child of Satan than a Child of God cannot be God's own strategy. Dealing with people in the matters of faith of our Lord Jesus Christ on basis of race, colour, tribe, ethnic group, language etc., fails the test of biblical objectivity. We must resist such spirit.

Earlier this year, Bishop Julian Dobbs decided to lead the Diocese of CANA East out of the Church of Nigeria. As a Church, we were disappointed with this action. However, we urge CANA to remain faithful and united in love under the new missionary Bishop, The Rt. Rev'd Felix Orji.

We rejoice with you all for every blessing received, and pray God's gracious hands to keep you under the shelter of His tabernacle. We equally commiserate with those who lost their precious ones, especially the family of the Bishop of Bukuru Diocese, Rt. Rev'd Jwan B. N. Zhumbes, on the home call of his beloved wife, Mrs. Lois Zhumbes, the family of Bishop of Western Izon, Rt. Rev'd Benjamin Enamezi on the home call of the wife, Edafe, and the family of the late Rt. Rev'd Joshua Ogunele, Bishop on the Coast Diocese.

Please, do well to continue to remember Leah Sharibu, Chibok girls and others who are still in the captivity of Boko Haram, bandits, killer herdsmen, kidnappers, and so on in your prayers that the Lord, in His mercy, will intervene in their situations.

We remain grateful to the Archbishop of Bendel Province, the Most Rev'd Dr Friday Imaekhai and his wife, Theresa; the Bishop of Asaba, the Rt. Rev'd Justus Nnaemeka Mogekwu and his wife, Theresa. Other Bishops of the Province of Bendel and their wives, the Clergy and their wives, the LOC and the entire Laity of the Province, especially the Executive Governor of Delta State, Senator Dr. Ifeanyi Arthur Okowa, and the Government of Delta State, for their sincere efforts towards the overall good success of the Standing Committee Meeting. May our gracious God reward your labour of love abundantly.

Beloved in Christ, we express our appreciation to you for your prayers and thank God for his presence with us at the Standing Committee Meeting. We are particularly pleased to inform you about the election of our successor, the fifth Primate of our Church, in the person of The

Most Rev'd Henry Ndukuba, Bishop of the Diocese of Gombe and Archbishop of the Province of Jos. We urge you to join in prayers for him and his family as they prepare to take up this great assignment, and for us, as we also prepare to disengage.

In conclusion, we wish to remind us that spiritual maturity does not mean or come with ability to display charismatic gifts; rather, it comes with increasing ability to crucify self, and the willingness to obey God's instructions in humility and selflessness.

Therefore, brethren, we urge you to “fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.”

May the grace of God be with you all.

Yours in the service of Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Okoh', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

The Most Rev'd Dr. Nicholas D. Okoh

Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria

Note this is inner back cover



Rt. Rev. Olubunmi & Mrs. Nkechi Akinlade