

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS PRESENTED/BISHOP'S CHARGE DELIVERED AT
THE FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTH SYNOD – DIOCESE OF NSUKKA-MONDAY
30TH OCTOBER 2006 AT ST. JOHN'S CHURCH ONUIYI NSUKKA**

My Lord Bishops

The Honourable Chancellor; Sir Barrister O. Nzewi

The Registrar – Hon. Justice F.I.N. Ngwu

Respected Judge of the High Court – High Court – Hon. Justice P. Enjere

The Assistance Registrar – Barrister Emeka Ogbonna

The Legal Secretary – Sir Barrister Chike Ngwu

The Venerable Archdeacons

The Clergy of the Diocese and other Clergy here present

The President Mother's Union, Women's Guild (Nnediugwu)

Knights and Ladies of St. Paul

Bishop's Nominees

Synod Delegates

Distinguished ladies and Gentlemen.

My dear people of God. Sons and daughters of our Almighty and most loving heavenly Father. It is with joy and great delight that I welcome you to yet another assembly of this great Diocese of Nsukka. I thank God for preserving your lives and giving you the good health to enable you be part of this year's Synod. God has continued to show us his faithfulness, Kindness and mercy not minding the circumstances of our time.

We thank him for journey mercies which he has granted to all of us from far and near to share fellowship in this holy convocation.

I always thank our God for all the faithful in this Diocese, mentioning you in our prayers. I continually remember before our God and Father your labour of love, your work produced by faith and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the 1st Session of the 5th Synod of our Diocese and we thank God in spite of all odds the Diocese has continued to move from strength to strength and the work of evangelism committed to us has been carried out with renewed zeal and enthusiasm. More and more grounds are being won for Christ in obedience to the great commission. God will continue to reward more and more abundantly all those who make this possible.

As you must have known this year's Synod was originally scheduled to be hosted by Eha-Amufu Archdeaconry but because of the unhealthy development in that area it became necessary to change the venue.

We thank Nsukka Archdeaconry for accepting to host the Synod not minding the short notice and the inconveniences occasioned by the movement of the retired Archdeacon the Ven. Jonathan N. Eze.

We thank the Archdeacon the Ven. Engr. Dr. T.C. Madueme and wife Dr. Mrs. Stella Ify Madueme, the clergy in the Archdeaconry and the archdeaconry Synod Planning Committee for making all the necessary arrangements for the success of the Synod.

We note with great delight all the changes that have taken place since they assumed office in this Archdeaconry. St. John's Church Onuiyi has been given a face-lift right from the altar to the western door.

Last year's Synod Theme was "Let us rise and build" taken from the book of Nehemiah 2¹⁷. The life and commitment of Nehemiah to the welfare and survival of his people and nation was brought out to us as a challenge. I believe that the lessons learnt from our bible studies based on this topic will continue to lead us in attempting and doing great things for God.

I want to remind us about the four factors that motivated Nehemiah to write his name in gold in the annals of Jewish history.

- (i) Remorse about the failure of his nation to obey the commandments of God which led them to captivity.
- (ii) Risk: He risked his life denying himself the pleasures of the King's Place in order to save his nation and people. He made a sacrifice.
- (iii) He took resolution to act believing that God would not let him down. God did not disappoint him.
- (iv) He finally rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, in spite of all oppositions.

Unfortunately instead of these four positive factors guiding us, some of us decide to take the fifth option which is rebellion, that does no one any good and does not make for progress.

This ungodly and retrogressive attitude was exhibited at Ibagwa during the last Diocesan Women Conference where people decided to rebel against the directives of the church, disgracing themselves and their entire community.

They thought they were wise, but they made themselves fools in the eyes of both strangers and some God fearing people who were present. Our clergymen cannot in all honesty exonerate themselves from what has happened, as all their activities and utterances before the Conference were clearly known. I simply want to remind you of what Paul said in (1 Corinthians 3:17) "if anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him, for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple." All enemies of progress must know that nothing can stop the work of God as you will be merely kicking against the bricks.

THE GUEST PREACHER

Let me at this point express our immense gratitude to our preacher in this year's Synod. He is the Most Rev. Ephraim Adebola Ademowo the Archbishop of the Province of Lagos and the Bishop of the Diocese of Lagos. The Most Rev. E.A. Ademowo is a very humble quiet and unassuming Bishop. He is a detribalized bishop and his Diocese is where people from other parts of the country are in reality accepted to work as Pastors without any molestation or intimidation.

As his Secondary School education at Macjob Grammar School, Abeokuta and Boys High School Lagos he attended Emmanuel College of Theology 1969 – 72 where he did his Dip. R.S. And Dip. Th. Then he went to University of Ibadan for his B.A, Hons. 1974 – 77 and Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife for his M.A. He finally has his Ph.D degree. He was the Bishop of Ilesha before being translated to Lagos.

He is married to Oluranti Ademowo and they are blessed with children. We thank him for his inspiring and challenging sermon yesterday and I believe that the lessons learnt from it

will guide all of us in our Christian living and commitment in order to bear fruits in keeping with true repentance.

HISTORY OF THE ARCHDEACONRY:

THE HISTORY OF ST. JOHN'S CHURCH ONUIYI NSUKKA

The establishment of St. John's Church, Onuiyi started with the vision of the families of Isama Izukanne and Amazue, that is Samuel and Lawrence respectively.

They saw the possibility of organizing the Anglicans, Methodists and the Presbyterians to come together and share a common place of worship. They include those living around Onuiyi Nsukka, Onuiyi Road, Ibagwa Road, Obollo Road, Catering Rest House Road and Junior Quarters, etc. They found that these group of Christians can worship in the Anglican Church if establish, because there was no other Church around the vicinity of Onuiyi Nsukka, Mrs. S. Izukanne was then a member of St. Paul's Parochial church Committee, from 1970 – 1973. As a member of the Church Committee, he wrote to the St. Paul's Church Committee, through the Ven. S.A. Eze, the Superintendent, the request was turned down, reason being that if a new Church is opened at Onuiyi, it will reduce the attendance to St. Paul's Church, Nsukka.

In November 1975, Rev. C. N. Ozoko Paid his first Pastoral visit to Mr. and Mrs. Isama Izukanne. The following men were assigned to look for a place of worship by the Rev. C.N. Ozoko: L. E. Amazue, late Jin Warriso, late Abel Ape and Mr. and Mrs. Isama Izukanne. They went to Mrs. Odua who agreed to allow them use their parlour. But after some days, she sent a message across to Mrs. Izukanne that their family disagreed with her about accommodating the new Church because the Church might claim the building in later years. Mrs. Izukanne now asked the church to start worshipping in their house.

The Church first started on 25th January, 1976 in the house of Mr. and Mrs. Isama Izukanne at 7.30 am by the Rev. C.N. Ozoko who came from St. Paul's Church to conduct the service.

MEMBERSHIP

The first members were 3 men and 4 women, while the rest were children. After one month of service, Rev. C.N. Ozoko selected his Pastor's warden in the person of Mazi L.E. Amazue. The membership of the Church steadily grew as weeks rolled by.

A delegation went to late Owelle of Onitsha, the Right Honorable Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe led by Dame Dr. Uche Azikiwe, the Rev. C.N. Ozoko and Mrs. Charity Izukanne asking for a space where the Church can worship. The Owelle gave them a collapsed old catering rest house. People worshiped under the mango tree for some weeks before going back to the rest house which had no roof. After the dismantling and clearing, they went back to the old rest house, where they continued until Mrs. Charity Izukanne, Rev. C.N. Ozoko, Dame Dr. Uche Zikiwe and the Ven. S.O Ugwuanyi went back to Owelle to ask that the Church use a section of the Printing Press building for worship because of rainfall. With love the Owelle granted the request. The Owelle requested that the Church should give him one person who will be collecting the key to the Press house and returning it after service.

The first Choir raised to be carrying the Church along were members of Izukanne's family, Amazue's family, Mrs. Azikiwe's family, late Jim Warrison, Late Abel Apeh, late Mrs. B.

Okonkwo, Late A.A. Ota, Mrs. N. Mozube, Mrs. O. Ota, Mr. and Mrs. E.O. L. Onuoha. Mr. and Mrs. Wilson Ewenike, Mrs. E. Akins, Mrs. Chima and Mr. J.K. Nwuguru.

As the member were increasing, the first church Committee was inaugurated and called All-Purpose Committee because it included all men and women in the Church for the year 1976. The first Choir Master was appointed in the person of Mr. Emma Odo for the period of 1977 – 1984, it was at this level that the members prayed and named the Church. St. Paul's Annex and later renamed it – St. John's Anglican Church Onuiyi Nsukka.

The first Harvest Committee Chairman elected by the church was Mr. E.I. Onuoha in 1977. Mr. S.C. Asoh was the first people's Warden, Mr. P.O. Anochie was the second Pastor's Warden 1985-1996, while Mr. S.I Erumole was the second People's Warden 1985-1996.

When the Rev. C.N. Ozoko gained admission into the University of Nigeria Nsukka, the Ven. S.O. Ugwuanyi asked the Church to appoint a man and a woman who will be representing the St. Paul's Annex in the St. Paul's Church Committee. Mazi L.E Amazue and Mrs. Charity Izukanne were appointed to do this for one year 1978. The first elected members of the Church Committee were Mr. and Mrs. Izukanne, Mr. and Mrs. Amazue, Dame Dr.Uche Azikiwe, Mr. A .A Ota, Mrs. Namoni Mozube, Mr. E. I. Asoh and Mr. P.O. Anochie.

From 1976-1992, Mrs. Charity Isama Izukanne was the leader of St. John's Women Group. She was the Moses of St. John's, she was going to Zik from time to time and actually persuaded him to give the building and the premises to the church. Eventually, Zik gave the building as an offer to God through the Rt. Rev. G.N. Otubelu of Enugu Diocese, now late.

From October 1977 when the Rev C. N. Ozoko gained admission into university of Nigeria, Nsukka until 1979, St. Paul's Church was sending preachers to Onuiyi but the rest of the church work rested on Mazi.L.E. Amazue, until Mr. O. Uzor, the catechist, was sent from St. Paul's church from 1979-1989.

The following Reverends were equally posted to this church since 1990:

1. The Rev. G.N. Ugwu 1990
2. The Rev. E.O. Chinwuko 1991
3. The Rev. B.O I. Ilo and the Rev. Dr. N.S. Nwigwe – 1995
4. Late Ven. D.O. Ogbonna, the Rev. Thanks-God Chigbo and the Rev Dr. Obi Maduakor 1996 – 1997.
5. The Rev. Steve N. Dimelu – July 1996 – July 1999, 2002 – 2005.
6. The Ven. E.I Onah 1999.
7. The Rev. Dr. E.E. Idike – 1999 – Date, the Rev. Ekene Eze – July 1999 – December, 1999.
8. The Ven. J.N. Eze – 2000 – June 2006.
9. The Rev. Paul A. Odoh 2000 – 2001
10. The Rev. David Nwede – July 2003 – July 2004
11. The Rev. N.U Ezema July 2004 – July 2005
12. The Rev. M.L. Nnamonu 2005 – Date
13. The Ven. Engr. Dr. T.C. Madueme 2006 – Date.

SOME IMPORTANT EVENTS THAT HAPPENED WITHIN THESE YEARS:

In 1984, Late Rt. Honourable Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, the Owelle of Onitsha, formally and generously handed over, as donation, to the Anglican Diocese of Enugu, both the building and the premises of the Church through his Lordship, the Rt. Rev. G.N. Otubelu.

In November 1988, on his 84th Birthday Celebration at St. John's Anglican Church, Onuiyi Nsukka, he also generously donated the sum of ₦50,000.00 to the Church for renovation of the building.

In 1990, the foundation of the Church Parsonage was laid by the Ven. S.O. Ugwuanyi, the 1st Archdeacon of Nsukka Archdeaconry in the presence of the resident Priest Rev. G.N. Ugwu and some members of the church Committee.

In 1993, the Parsonage was decked and put in a habitable condition by a good philanthropist.

On May 14th, 1995 St. John's Church, Onuiyi and St. Andrew's Church, Orba Road, Nsukka were lifted up as St. John's Parish with the Rev. B.O.I Ilo, being the first Superintendent.

In 1996, the St. John's Anglican Church was made an Archdeaconry headquarters by the Rt. Rev. Dr. J.C. Ilonuba, the Late Ven. D.O. Ogbona, being the first Archdeacon to be there. During the time of Rev. S.N. Dimelu, the small Church Hall was built for the children to have their services in 1996.

St. John's Church, Onuiyi hosted the 9th Annual Diocesan Women's Conference on the Mothers' Union and Women's Guild from Thursday 12th September to Sunday 15th 2002. The Conference had as its theme "Fight the Good Fight of Faith". (Timothy 6:12).

On April 23rd, 2006 during a very colourful divine service, the Ven. Engr. Dr. T.C. Madueme was installed as the 5th Archdeacon of Nsukka Archdeaconry at St. John's Church Onuiyi Nsukka by his Lordship, the Rt. Rev. Dr. J.C. Ilonuba (JP), Bishop of Nsukka Diocese.

EMMANUEL ANGLICAN CHURCH, ALOR-UNO:

The Church was founded in the year 1927. It was established through the help of the then traditional ruler of Alor-Uno, Nsukka. It was when his Royal Highness Eze Omeje Ugwuanyi wanted to erect the first upstairs in Alor Uno as his palace that he sought the help of Enyi brothers who were Sawyers and carpenters. The Enyi brothers in course of their work at Enugu Ngwo has come in contact with the Anglican Church under Rev. Ejindu and have become members. The Church was then known as Church Missionary Society (CMS).

When the Enyi brothers started work at Eze's Palace, They observed Sunday worships every Sunday. They sang and prayed and did not do any work on that day. This continued for some times and Eze Omeje Ugwuanyi Idike Amoke took interest in this their worship and wanted the Church to take off with his people as members. The Enyi brothers helped the Eze to get in touch with the superintendent, Rev. Ejindu at Enugu Ngwo. The Eze negotiated with the Pastor who assured him that a residential teacher will be posted to Alor-Uno. Eze Omeje Ugwuanyi later paid a deposit of Eight Pound (8) being the serving teacher's salary. Mr. Joseph Eze from Nachi in Udi was posted as the first teacher. The church started near Eze's Palace and was later relocated to Ala Itakwuna which is the present site. It was an evil forest.

The early converts were the following:

Late Mr. Abraham Eze

Late Mr. Zacheus Ugwu

Late Mr. Christian Ezema
Late Mr. Margaret Eze
Late Mr. Docas Ajibo and others.

The Church from here spread to other parts of Old Nsukka Division – Nsukka, Edem, Ibagwa-Ani, Obukpa, Enugu-Ezike, Iheakpu, Ovoko, Old Isi-Uzo, Uzo-Uwani and Igbo-Etiti.

Some of the early teachers were:

1. Mr. Joseph Eze
2. Mr. Agbasi Harrison
3. Mr. O J. Edeoga
4. Mr. Dan Obi
5. Godwin Obeta.

The priests that have served in the church area are as follow:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|-------------|
| 1. The Rev. Walter Ezeilo | - | 1991 – 1994 |
| 2. The Rev. Felix Nwani | - | 1994 – 1995 |
| 3. The Rev. Canon Obiora E. Chinwuko | | 1996 – 1998 |
| 4. The Rev. Canon M.O Nwobodo | - | 1999 |
| 5. The Rev. Canon L.N. Ngwu | - | 2000 – 2004 |
| 6. The Rev. Canon J.C. Urama | - | 2005 – Date |

The Church has grown in strength, spiritually and educationally. It has medical Doctors, University Lecturers, lawyers and businessmen and women. The church has Hon. Member including our Mayor, Hon. Lydia Nkechi Omeje (JP). The Church also has Knights and Ladies to its credit.

ST ANDREW’S ANGLICAN CHURCH, IBAGWA-ANI, ALOR-UNO PARISH

The church was planted in the year 1928 through the help of late chief Ugwuoke Oloto the then traditional ruler of Ibagwa-Ani. Others who assisted him were Chief Ugwuoke Omada and Chief Eze Nwiyi. The Church started at Late Chief Ugwuoke Oloto compound with about thirty converts. When late Reved. Asiekwu was posted to Nsukka as the Priest in charge, he led a delegation that met with Chief Ugwuoke Oloto for the acquisition of the present site and reduction of some evil traditional practices. The first teacher posted to his Church was Mrs. James Ebede from Udi 1928 – 1930. Others followed but by 1946 up to 1950 there was no teacher at this Church and it suffered a serious setback. This set back is still affecting the church now as it has not grown to full maturity. The serving Priest Rev. Emmanuel Agbowo is the first Priest in this Church.

CHRIST CHURCH, EZIANI:

This Church was the 3rd off-spring of the first C.M.S. Church which was brought to Obimo Town in 1930 through the effort of Late Mr. David Ugwuoke. Late Mr. David Ugwuoke got the Church from the resident Priest at Nsukka, the Rev’d Asiekwu (now Venerable). The first church was built at Umuayiko village and it was called. St. Bartholomew’s Church, Obimo 1. After some time it has an off-spring at Akachelle Obimo West of Obimo town, about 10km from the church. It was called C.M.S. Church Obimo 2. On December 4th 1932, Mr. Abraham

ugwu Idu, a native of Enuagu Obimo Church as it was then called, brought the C.M.S. Church Eziani. It was then called C.M.S. Church Enuagu Obimo 3, which is now called Christ Anglican in Eziani, had her first persecution in 1939. It was closed down for inability of the members to maintain the teacher, in-charge of the Church.

In the same year, the Roman Catholic Church came into the town and would have taken over the property of the C.M.S., if not for the prompt intervention of the court.

The RCM members confronted the C.M.S members by building a Roman Catholic Church very close to the C.M.S. Church. This action by R.C.M. Church members was unbearable by the C.M.S members. It resulted into a court case. The C.M.S members won the case. The Roman Catholic Church were ordered by the Court to removed their church building and build it at distance from that of the C.M.S Church. And it was done so. Another case decided by the Court was about sharing the assets of C.M.S. Church members between the runaway Roman Catholic Church members, i.e. those who broke away from the C.M.S Member should get no share since they had joined a new church of their own when the C.M.S Church was collapsed. Later on the Roman Catholic Church was closed down for lack of members up to this day.

Recently also, some disgruntled members from Christ Church pulled away to become founders of other denominations in this town. Between 1970 and 1980, there sprang up three other churches in Eziani, namely: the Ascension Church, the Assemblies of God Church and the Apostolic Church. Each of these churches is trying by all means to grab as many as she could, from weak members of the Anglican Church.

But despite all these challenges, Anglican members forms the 70% population of the town. It was from the Christ Anglican members that built the only Elementary School in this town. The members are strong in their faith and try always to win unbelieving souls to Christ.

Between these periods in review, the first Church Teacher to be in charge of this church was Mr. Francis Nwaeze, a native of Aguleri in Anambra State. Since this Church began, it has more than twenty-seven church teachers, sometimes a church teacher and sometimes a school teacher doing both the work.

On 16th February, 1992 when Edem Parish was inaugurated, Christ Church Eziani willingly excised from obimo group of Churches and joined Edem Parish.

On January, 1996, Theophilus N. Onah was posted to the Church as Church Teacher. On 7th July, 1996, he was made a Deacon and was retained as the first Priest of the church. From that year, many other Priests has been serving the church, viz:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| The Rev. L.N. Eze | - | January - December 1998 |
| The Rev. Canon C.A. Onyechi | - | January 1999 – December 2002 |
| The Rev. E.C. Agbowo | - | January 2003 – July 2004 |
| The Rev. IK. C. Ezeja | - | July 2004 and presently in charge. |

EDEM-ANI PARISH

The entrance of Anglican Church popularly known the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S) into 1930. The Rev. A.Asiekwu and his team of Catechists and Church Teachers arrived at the palace of late Chief Ugwu Asogwa Ozoko, of Umuchagwu Edem-Ani, the father of Ven. C.N. Ozoko (Rtd), who warmly welcomed them. Chief Ugwu Asowa Ozoko, one of the Warrant Chiefs in Nsukka Divions then, was with other chiefs for settlement of cases in his palace when the Rev. A. Asiekwu addressed the crowd.

Chief Ugwu Asogwa Ozoko welcomed the message with enthusiasm which made Rev. A. Asiekwu to request for a larger crowd to whom he would sell his message. Through the services of town criers Chief Ozoko invited the people and Rev. Asiekwu preached a sermon to them which moved the crowd to accepted and believe the gospel. Following this acceptance, the Rev. A. Asiekwu told them that they would need a place of worship, a School Teacher who would be paid and housed by the people. Chief Ozoko offered his general council hall in his palace for church and school services and also accepted to pay the teacher. Rev. Asiekwu thanked the Chief and requested him to choose one of the catechists in his team of work in Edem-Ani. The Chief chose Mr. Simon Ebede, who then became the first teacher in St. John's Church, Edem-Ani in 1930.

THE EARLY CONVERTS THEN WERE:

Late Mr. Charles Ozoko, Mr. Philip Asogwa, Mr. James Ezema, Mr. Job Asadu, Mr. Samuel Amoke, Mr. Aruogu Nwayogu, Mr. Albert Ugwuda, Mr. Abraham Ugwuda, Mr. Lazarus Ugwuda, Mr. Albert Ugwuda, Mr. Abraham Ugwuda, Mr. Lazarus Ugwuda, Mr. Moses Ogbu, Mr. Israel Okoro and Elder Gabriel Amoke the only surviving member of the early converts. These people were all baptized by the Rev. A. Asiekwu.

The School was later moved up from the palace of Chief Ozoko to Onu Nshi Odiete in the present Obinagu Owerre where make shift church services were held in search of converts in 1935. However, due to long distance trekking and considering the fact that all the converts were from this valley part of Edem-Ani, a new location was sought, again Chief Ugwu Asogwa Ozoko donated his piece of land for the siting of both the Church and the School. This made Mr. Ebede, the teacher to bring down the church and the school to the present site where St. John's Church, Edem-Ani was built. Since then, the church has continued to grow in strength and spiritual attainment.

Mr. Ebede and his teacher of successors including Mr. Charles Esom, Mr. Simon Mgbohere and a host of others worked as both Catechists and school Teachers between 1930 and 1960.

Other workers after Mr. Ebede and his team were:

Mr. Vincent Ugwu	-	1961
Mr. W.C. Ani	-	1962
Mr. Samuel Eze	-	1963 - 19064
Mr. Godfrey Ajibo	-	1965 - 1972
Mr. Isaac Alio	-	1972 - 1974
Mr. Joseph C. Ogbodo	-	1974 - 1976
Mr. Romanus Odo	-	1976 - 1978
Mr. Emmanuel Okoro	-	1978 - 1985
Mr. Jonathan Nwadinobi	-	1985 – 1987

Rev. Now the Ven. Benjamin O. Nnaji February 1988 January 1992 was the Priest to serve in St. John's Church. Edem-Ani.

The Church was upgraded to a Parish status in 1992 by the late Bishop Emeritus, the Rt.Rev. G.V. Otubelu and was inaugurated on Sunday 16th February, 1992, with Rev. now the Ven. Emmanuel Ifeanyichukwu Onah as the first Parish Superintendent. Other Parish Superintendents after the Ven. Onah are:

The Rev. now Ven. B.C.D. Diara – January 1995 – January 1996

The Rev. now Ven B.O.L Ilo – January 1996 – January 2001.

The Rev. Canon now Ven. G.U Nnamani – January 2001 - January 2003

The Rev. Can E.E. Ugwu – January 2003 – January 2005

The Rev. Canon L.N. Ugwu – January 2005 to date

The Church has also produced four indigenous Priests as follows

The Ven. C.N. Ozoko (Rtd)

The Ven. J.N. Eze (Rtd)

The Rev. Samuel Ajibo (Rtd)

Late Rev. Samuel Ayogu

The Church is currently building a new personage. To God be the glory.

ST PETER’S CHURCH EDEM-ENU (OZZI-EDEM):

The establishment of C.M.S mission in Edem-Ani in 1930 through the effort of Chief Ugwu Asogwa Ozoko, the father of Rt. Ven. C.N. Ozoko motivated some enthusiasts in Ozzi-Edem to request for the introduction of C.M.S mission in Edem-Enu in 1933. Late Messrs Onyishi Ugwuwohe, Asogwa Nwonah Iyanyi, Omeje Nwagbu, Amokeja Ezema, Oke Nwa Ezeanyi and Ugwuta Nwajibo encouraged Rev. A. Asiekwu to plant the Church in Edem-Enu

St. Peter’s Church, Edem-Enu (Ozzi-Edem) was planted in April 1933 with Mr. Johnson Akwuba as the first catechist/Teacher. Then Amamkpume villa was used as the Church/School house. The first converts were Isaiah Ajibo, Gabriel Ajibo, John Okeh, Joseph Oke, David Ugwoke, Lazarus Ugwoke, Ani Nwonah, Ezeja Nwonah, Ezugwu Nwaze, Benice Ugwu Serah Ugwoke, Ugwu Amoke etc.

The Church house was moved from Amamkpume villa to ikpogwu, the centre of Ozzi-Edem.

The Church was moved down to the present site seven years later with Chatechist Okide who administered it till 1941 when the authority closed the church/School for nonpayment of Church Assessment. The Church remained closed till 1957 when Late Chief Gabriel Ajibo, Stephen Okuli and Mr. Godfrey Ajibo employed Mr. Silas Asogwa of Ovoko as the Church Teacher. Therefore the teacher was paid by members.

The closure of the church made many of the converts to be absorbed by St. Dominic’s Roman Catholic Church in Ozzi-Edem. The few faithful strived and continued to evangelize. Thereafter the church authority sent Catechist Ezenwa of Udi to man the church in 1959 and it continued thus:

Ezenwa	-	1959 – 1962
Ene	-	1963 – 1964
Michael Atta	-	1964 – 1965
Chief Gabriel Ajibo	-	1965 – 1972
Philip Aneke	-	1972 – 1975
Clement Ajima	-	1976 – 1978
R.A. Orji	-	February 1978 – December 1978
Chief Gabriel Ajibo	-	1979 – 1980

Clement Ajima - January 1981 – April 1987
 Johnson Aba - May 1983 – April 1987
 Emma U. Omeje - May 1987 – January 1990
 Thomas Itodo - February 1990 – December 1991.
 Frank Ilo (now Rev) - January 1992 – December 1993
 Chinedu Onah (now Rev. Canon) January 1993 – July 1994
 Gabriel C. Ajiobo (Jnr) August 1994 – December 1995
 Johnson Ugwu - February 1994 – December 1997
 Clifford Ugwuanyi - January 1998 – December 2002
 Emmanuel Ogbochie - January 2003 – December 2005
 Luke C. Eze - January 2006 – August 2006
 The Rev. Joel Ogbu - Sept. 2006 – Date Rev. Joel Ogbu is the first and only resident Priest in St. Peter’s Anglican Church. Edem-Enu.
 However, the Church has got three indigenous Priests viz:
 The Rev. Canon W.E. Ezechukwu
 The Rev. Samuel E. Ezemma
 The Rev. Emmanuel Chidi Ezechukwu

The members are now building a permanent Church house hence they have been worshipping in school building. By God’s grace the members are increasing in both leaps and bounds.

OKPUJE PARISH:
ST. PETER’S CHURCH, OKPUJE:

Christianity came to Okpuje in the year 1928 through Mr. John Ezinwa, A Tailor/Timber Sawyer from Awka, and an Anglicans by faith. He settled at Okpuje for a business and was able to approach and convince the then eze Okpuje, Chief Obute Ayogu on the need to establish. C.M.S. Church and School in Okpuje.

Chief Obute Ayogu accompanied Mr. John Ezenwa to Nsukka to see Rev. Asiekwu, the Priest in charge of St. Paul’s Church, Nsukka Zonal group of Churches. That same year, 1928, Rev. A. Asiekwu posted Mr. Illoanyasi as the first Church teacher, and they first worshipped inside the Chiefs meeting Hall at Ibeku Okpuje. Some of their early converts were Ugwu Odede, Samuel Ogere Okeh, Ugwu Nwonyishi, Job Okeh, Abraham Iyeke, Isaiah Ayogu, John Nwoke, Eze Nwogo, Obute Eze and Ueeru Nwogu.

By the year 1929, the Church due to this numerical growth, introduced a school and moved from the Chief’s Meeting Hall to Ibeku village square for a bigger house.

In the 1930 Mr. Iloanyasi was transferred and Mr. Michael Onwukwe from Inyi succeeded him. It was in 1930 that the church was transferred to the present site. Since then, many church teachers have come and gone in the following order.

Mr. Daniel Obi - 1935 – 1938
 Mr. Emesi - 1939 – 1941
 Mr. Jonathan Ugwu - 1942 – 1946
 Mr. Samuel Ugwu - 1947 – 1950
 Mr. Alphonsus Emere - 1951 – 1953
 Mr. James Ugwoke - 1954 – 1956
 Mr. Reuben Asogwa - 1957 – 1958

Mr. Anyadiegwu	-	1957 – 1961
Mr. Michael Nwokenagu		1962 – 1964
Mr. Michael Omeje	-	1965 – 1966

By the year 1970, when the Nigerian Civil War ended, the government took over schools. Since then the following church workers have served in this church.

Mr. C.U. Ezikeanyi from Aku	-	1970 - 1971
Mr. Samuel Ajibo from Edem	-	1972 - 1973
Mr. Fidelis Ezugwu	-	1973 - 1974
Mr. D.O. Ugodu from Aku	-	1974 - 1976
Mr. Lawrence Asonyi from Eha-Alumona	-	1975 - 1982
Mr. Hyacinth Agbo from Ohodo	-	1982 - 1985
Mr. Chinedu Onah (now a Rev. Canon)	-	1992 - 1993
Mr. S.N. Ugwoke from Obukpa	-	1994 - 1995
Mr. Clifford Ugwuanyi from Alor-Agu	-	1996 - 1997
The Rev. Theo Ugwuishiwu from Opi	-	1997 - 1998
The Rev. M.O. Nwobodo from Ngwo	-	1999 - 2000
The Rev. Joseph O. Agbo from Opi	-	2000 - 2001
The Rev. Paul A. Odoh from Eha-Amufu	-	2002 – date

It is worth recording and to the glory of the Almighty God that this church attained a Parish status and was inaugurated on the 5th day of June 2004.

Since then, they have had other churches thus;

St. Augustine's Ogbogoro and Christ Church, Umueze

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, OKUTU:-

The year 1933 marked the inception of Christianity in Okutu, through Mr. John Ugwu (late) who traveled to Odoru in Northern region of Nigeria, now Kogi State came across Qua Iboe church and on attending the church requested the Pastor to come and establish the Church at Okutu. The Pastor told John that Qua Iboe Church was for Igala land, while C.M.S, teacher was sent to Okutu.

The first teacher that year, 1933, was Mr. Johnson A. Ibekwe, from Newi in the present Anambra, State. With the commitments of the founder Mr. John Ugwu, other converts were made in the persons of Elijah Asogwa, Moses Ugwuanyi and David Ugwuanyi. They first had their church service in the house of David Ugwuanyi.

As the church was growing, there was the need for a more accommodating place, and in November, the same year a bigger church was built at Isi-Ururu in Okutu.

The Church continued to grow, and in the year 1959, it was moved to the present site. It is interesting to note that the church has had teachers/catechists numbering thirty-one since the inception thus:

Mr. Johnson Aba from Newi	-	1933 - 1935
Mr. Simon Ebede from Okigwe	-	1936 - 1937
Mr. Charles Esom	-	1938 - 1940
Mr. John Ugwu from Okutu	-	1941 - 1943
Mr. Eze Nwukwa from Achi	-	1949 - 1950

Mr. Simon	-	1950 - 1952
Mr. Gabriel Ajibo from Edem	-	1953 - 1956
Mr. Shadrack Ezekwe from Abagana	-	1957
Mr. Vincent Eze from Obimo	-	1958 - 1959
Mr. Vincent Ugwu from Alor-Uno	-	1958 - 1963
Mr. John Mbah from Mgbuji	-	1962 - 1963
Mr. Samuel Ugwu from Ikem	-	1964
Mr. Samuel Eze from Ibagwa	-	1965
Mr. Christopher Omah from Okutu	-	1966 – 19 67
Mr. Cleopas Ugwuanyi from Okutu	-	1968 – 1969
Mr. Mathias Ezeaku from Okutu	-	1970 – 1971
Mr. Solomon Agbabu from Okutu	-	1972 – 1974
Mr. Sylvester Ugwuanyi from Eha-Alumona	-	1975 – 1977
Mr. James Njoku from Aku	-	1980 – 1981
Mr. Fidelis C.K. Aneke from Obukpa	-	1982
Mr. Lawrence Abonyi from Eha-Alumona	-	1983 – 1984
Mr. Johnah Abba from Unadu	-	1983 – 1984
Mr. Ephraim Abonyi from, Opi	-	1989
Mr. Fidelis Ugwoke from Obukpa	-	1990 – 1994
Mr. Clement Omeke from Alor-Agu	-	1995 – 1996
Mr. Benjamin U. Eze from umuida	-	1997 – 1998
Mr. Kenneth Eze from lejja	-	1999 – 2000
Mr. C.D. Okoro from Abbi	-	2001 – 2003
Mr. Samuel O. Ugwuoke from Eziani	-	2004 – date

We thank God for the efforts these men put to the growth of this church to this present level.

ST. STEPHEN’S CHURCH, ANUKA:

In the year 1982, a nursing sister from Ukehe Miss Eucharia transferred her chemist shop from Okpuje to Anuka.

Being a strong Anglican member, and residing at Igwe Okeze’s compound, she was able to convince the Igwe on the need to establish a church. The Igwe later gave a house in his compound for church services.

The first converts were the Igwe Peter Okeze, Mr. John Okeze, Vincent Eze, women and children.

By 1984, the A.Y.F. Okpuje and Okutu led by Mr. C.U. Ayogu and Augustine Ezeaku respectively carried out Evangelical outreach and programmes to Anuka to build up the Church. After the visit of the A.Y.F. a larger area of land was given to the church and with the assistance of the Ibagwa-Aka Parish, church building was erected on the land and that has been the church site till today. The first assistant that was posted to the church was Mr. Ikechukwu Nwaike, succeeded by Mr. Vincent Ezoma, followed by Mr. Chinedu Onah (now Rev. Canon), the next person was Mr. John Ezema, others are – Thomas Ugwoke, from Obukpa, Mr. Chukwudi Okanya from Alor-Uno (now Rev). By July 1988, Mr. Jonathan Ugwu also from Alor-Uno was sent to the church at Anuka. In the year 2001, Mr. Jonathan Ugwu declared that he did not want to continue his services with the church as a church teacher. By February 2005 Mr. Basi Okenyi from Edem-Enu was posted to the church and he is still active in the service.

EVENTS SINCE AFTER THE LAST SYNOD”

1. Parish Inauguration

Three Parishes have been inaugurated within this period.

They are:

Ihenyi Parish Inaugurated on 13th November, 2005

Imilike-Agu Parish inaugurated on 20th November 2005 and

Umuopu Parish inaugurated on 6th August 2006.

Pray for these Parishes that members will give the needed support for a sustained spiritual and infrastructural development.

The response of abroad members of Umuopu during their Parish inauguration is very commendable, particularly those from Lagos. It is my belief that if all our abroad members will be involved in the activities in their home Diocese great things will be happening among us.

2. Collation of Archdeacons and Canons:

On Sunday 5th March 2006 a service of Collation of Archdeacons and Canons was held at St. Paul’s Cathedral, Nsukka.

Six Archdeacons were collated.

The Ven. Dr. B.C.D. Diara

The Ven. Engr. Dr. T.C. Madueme

The Ven. C.S. Anioke

The Ven. G.A. Ogorji

The Ven. C.C. Ogbu and

The Ven. B.O.I Ilo

Five Canons were equally collated and installed. They are:-

The Rev. Canon Aloysius E. Agbo

The Rev. Canon Manasseh O. Nwobodo

The Rev. Canon Chinedu Onah

The Rev. Canon Collins Ik. Ugwu and

The Rev. Canon Linus N. Ngwu.

3. Creation and Inauguration of 3 more Archdeaconries:-

Within the period in review three new Archdeaconries were created and inaugurated.

They are:

Isi Uzo Archdeaconry, with headquarters at St. Stephen’s Church, Neke. Inaugurated on Sunday 19th march 2006 and the first archdeacon Ven. C.S. Anioke installed

Nsukka East Archdeaconry, with quarters at St. Mary’s Opi. Inauguration was on Sunday 2nd April 2006 the first archdeaconry Ven. C.C. Oghu installed.

Nsukka South Archdeaconry, with headquarters at St. Thomas’ Church, Aku. Inauguration and installation of the Ven. G. A. Ugorji as the first Archdeacons was on Sunday 9th April 2006.

The number of Archdeaconries now in the Diocese is 9 (Nine).

On Sunday 23rd April 2006 Ven. Engr. Dr. T.C. Madueme was installed as the Archdeacon of Nsukka Archdeaconry to replace Ven. J.N. Eze who was retiring.

4. Distinguished community Service Award and Appointment of Justice of Peace – Re – Mrs. Roseline U. Ilonuba (Nnediugwu):-

We thank God that within this period the President of Mothers’ Union and Women’s Guild Mrs. Roseline U. Ilonuba (Nnediugwu) was recognized for her contributions in the promotion of a better society.

On 26th November 2005 the University of Nigeria Alumni association Awka Branch gave her the “Distinguished Community Service Award” of the Branch for the year 2005.

We thank all of you who accompanied us to that historical event. May God bless all of you in Jesus’ name.

On 30th May 2006 she was sworn in as a “Justice of the Peace” in Enugu State, by the Chief Judge of the State, Hon. Justice I.A. Umezulike. Other members of our Diocese that benefited in this State recognition include:- The Rev. Canon Aloysius Agbo, Sir Dr. Emenike A. Onwurah and Sir Chike Asogwa.

We thank the State Government for this recognition and pray that the recipients of this honour will discharge their duties to the satisfaction of those who reposed this confidence in them.

We equally thank God for Dr. Mrs. Kay Onyechi who was appointed Commissioner for Education in Anambra State.

5. Foundation Stone Laying

The Foundation Stone Laying of St. Mary’s Church, Iheakpu Awka was on Sunday 14th May 2006, we thank those who identified with this event and gave in support of the work of evangelism.

6. 68th Birthday Celebration.

On 17th June 2006 the women organized my 68th Birthday Celebration. The birthday celebration was a surprise package to me as I never thought about it. I sincerely thank all the good people of this Diocese both clergy and laity who made out time to share fellowship with us. The turnout was impressive and the gifts that I received that day were fantastic. My prayer is that God will replenish the sources of those good gifts in Jesus name Amen.

7. Trinity Ordination

On Sunday 1st July 2006 our Trinity Ordination was held at St. Mary’s Church, Opi. They were five Deacons and Six Priests.

The Deacons are:

The Rev. Matthew Ezema

The Rev. Nathaniel Ugwuanyi

The Rev. Ifeanyi Ukwueze
The Rev. Benjamin Ik. Ezeakor and
The Rev. Emmanuel Ndubuisi

The Priest are:-

The Rev. Samson Eneh
The Rev. Cyprian Ezugwu
The Rev. Makuochukwu Nnamonu
The Rev. Jude Oga
The Rev. Chukwudi Okanya
The Rev. Emmanuel Onor

These Pastors have since been sent to churches where they will minister. It is our prayer that God who has called them will make them effective instruments in his hands.

TAP (Train A Priest)

The need for more qualified clergymen continues to mount as our evangelistic outreach spreads, more converts won for Christ and Churches planted. We still need men and women who are committed to selfless service to God and are prepared to give from what God has given them to make it possible for more labourers to be sent to the harvest.

We thank the Girls' Guild of the Diocese and their enthusiastic co-ordinator Dr. Mrs. Stella Ify Madueme for continuing to donate the sum of ₦100,000.00 (One Hundred Thousand Naira) only every year towards the training of the clergy.

I believe that we have people and organizations that could support this project in order not to make those who offer themselves for the ordained ministry bear the total cost of their training

CATHEDRAL PROJECT

Last year, we planned to launch for the Cathedral building, but it never happened because all the necessary contacts were not made and the model was not ready.

During this Synod the Cathedral building Committee will report to us what has been done so far. In preparation for the launching last year, we decided that each adult male should contribute at least ₦1,000.00 (One Thousand Naira) only, each woman ₦500.00 (Five Hundred naira) only, while children will contribute ₦100.00 (One Hundred Naira) only, this should be done at Church level and paid to the Diocesan Financial Secretary.

8. Retirements

On Saturday 1st April 2006 the Diocese organized a send-off party for our clergy who retired after meritorious service.

The Ven. and Mrs. Nathan O. Okwu
The Ven. and Mrs. J.N. Eze
The Rev. and Mrs. Fidelis C. Ezugwu
The Rev. and Mrs. G.C. Eze

It is our prayer that God will continue to bless and sustain them in their retirement and give them many more years of happy sojourn here in earth. Even in retirement they can still be very useful assets to the Church.

9. Women's Work

We are all witnesses of the giant strides the women of this Diocese have been making under the able leadership of the Mothers' Union and Women's Guild – president. Mrs. R.U. Ilonuba (Nnediugwu) a motivator, catalyst, organizer and mobilizer. We thank God for her vision for the women of the Diocese and for organizing different workshops aimed at making them self-employed and establishing some small scale industries at church and Parish levels.

The Shopping Plaza which by God's grace will soon be completed is a monumental achievement which will be in eternal remembrance of those who were pioneers in this great Diocese of ours.

It is our prayer that the men through the Christian Fathers' fellowship will wake up to their responsibility and assume their rightful role as leaders and not followers.

10. Obituary

The following members of the Diocese joined the saints triumphant within the year.

Sir Samson Enyi

Sir John Uzu Nnaji

Sir G.A. Ugwuegede – Igwe of Opi-Agu (Chairman Diocesan Education Board)

Mr. Josiah Odoh, teacher at St. Cyprian's Girl's Secondary School, Nsukka

Igwe Francis Ugwu

Mr. Wilfred Onyike – retired Catechist.

May they rest in peace and rise in glory. Please continue to remember their families in your prayers.

ECCLESIASTICAL PROVINCES EAST OF THE NIGER:

On the 8th and 9th February 2006 our Diocese hosted the Episcopal Synod and the Provincial Council of the Provinces of the Niger, Niger Delta and Owerri (Former Province II).

We shall ever remain grateful to individuals families and groups that assisted in hosting the meeting.

The Vice Chancellor, the Ven. Prof. C.O. Nebor needs special mention. We thank him for his benevolence and generosity. He provided accommodation for all the Bishops and also gave them dinner. Our prayer is that he will never lack in Jesus' name.

Visitation to St. Paul's University Awka:

The Standing Committee on Private Universities (SCOPU) of National Universities Commission paid a verification visit to St. Paul's College Awka on the 26th and 27th May 2006.

For an effective take off of any University at least 100 Hectares of land is required. After inspecting possible sites they recommended that Oji-River be accepted as the permanent site.

Church of Nigeria News:

The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) under the table and visionary leadership of the Primate, his Grace, the Most Rev. Dr. Peter Jasper Akinola CON, chairman CAPA, President of CAN continues to give leadership to the global South and the entire Anglican World in its stand against the ordination of gay priests and same sex marriage which ECUAA and the Western World approves of Akinola who has been described as the “African Lion” was named in May 2006 as one of Time Magazine’s 100 people who shape our world. Rick Warren the author of “The Purpose Driven Life”, said of him “Akinola personifies the epochal change in the Christian Church, namely that the Leadership, influence, growth and center of gravity in Christianity is shifting from the Northern hemisphere to the Southern”. This assertion was confirmed when on 20th August 2006 Church of Nigeria made history when the Rt. Rev. Martyn Minns was among the bishops consecrated at the Ecumenical Center Abuja and sent back to the U.S. to exercise Episcopal oversight for the church of Nigeria.

Consecration:

At Christ Church Cathedral, Marina Lagos 11th October 2005

The Rt. Rev. Ibrahim Malchus	-	Yola
The Rt. Rev. J.G. Dabinat	-	Gusau
The Rt. Rev. A.Ogunyemi	-	Damaturu
The Rt. Rev. Abiodun Olaoye	-	Congo

At the Ecumenical Centre Abuja 20th August 2006

The Rt. Rev. Christian Ide	-	Warri Diocese
The Rt. Rev. Musa Tula	-	Bauchi
The Rt. Rev. Adebayo Akinde	-	Lagos Mainland
The Rt. Rev. Martyn Minns	-	Bishop in the Church of God for the convocation of Anglicans in North America (CANA)

Translation:

The Bishop of Jalingo The Rt. Rev. Simon Peters Mutum was made a non-Geographic bishop for the nomadic mission to thousand of Fulanis who have not heard about Christ.

Obituary:

The Rt. Rev. L. Ereaku	-	Bishop of Bauchi
The Rt. Rev. G.U. Otubelu	-	Retired Bishop of Enugu
The Rt. Rev. Dr. R.N.C. Nwosu	-	Retired Bishop of Asaba

Mrs. Bisi Awosoga wife of the Bishop of Ijebu

Lady Joana Olufosoye wife of the first Primate, Church of Nigeria

Let us stand up and observe a minute’s silence in memory of the faithful departed.

The State of the Nation

We thank God that Nigeria as a nation continues to move on to self-actualization and true nationhood after 46 years of gaining independence from the Colonial masters. We note that the present administration has put in place laudable programmes aimed at Political, economic and Social reforms, but most of these programmes have not been judiciously carried out to the letter. The fight against corruption can only be won when it ceases to be selective in its operation and when those fighting corruption are clean themselves.

We thank God for the way he over ruled in the matter of the third term agenda in order to stall the ambition of selfish and greedy politicians. However as we look forward to the 2007

elections one observes that the political terrain of the nation is precarious and deadly. To many Nigerians in the political game, politics continues to be a do or die affair, politics with bitterness. According to Rt. Hon. Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, “man shall not be wolf to man”. But today that is not the case in Nigeria, political assassinations continue to be the order of the day in our country. Already many gubernatorial aspirants of the ruling party have been assassinated. They include those of Lagos and Ekiti and some other states in the North. Another candidate in Abia State was savagely assaulted and dispossessed of his property. In some other states we note that there has been wanted destruction of lives and property. The incessant abduction of oil workers in the Niger Delta region continues to be a worrisome phenomenon for us as a nation and calls for both Federal and State governments to see that necessary steps are taken to bring it under control.

Majority of Nigerian graduates still remain unemployed and this has led to some of them engaging in dubious means and criminal activities in order to survive. Our roads both at Federal, State and Local government levels do not reflect the wealth of this nation. We still hear about religious riots in some parts of the country and unless the Federal government takes a drastic action against the perpetrators of this ungodly act people will not learn to respect human lives. We note that the combined efforts of the Army and the Police has helped in reducing crime but life in some rural areas continues to be unsafe and robbery in many places have defied all solution.

The INEC is leaving no stone unturned to give Nigeria a hitch-free and credible election come 2007 and it is our prayer that God will intervene to make next year an acceptable year of the Lord.

THE SYNOD THEME:

“CALLED TO PRODUCE FRUIT IN KEEPING WITH REPENTANCE” (LUKE 3:8)

The theme of this year’s Synod is John’s challenge to the people who repented following his teaching and were coming to him for baptism. John’s message had a twofold emphasis.

- (i) The imminent appearance of the Messianic kingdom.
- (ii) The imminent appearance to prepare for this event. He proclaimed an exhibition of repentance in the affairs of ordinary life and wanted his audience to show it in their daily relationship with one another. He therefore has an answer for every group of people who cared to how and what was expected of them (Luke 3:10 – 14).

Let us first of all look at the three key words in this theme CALLED FRUIT,

1. REPENTANCE

The word “CALLED” is derived from the Greek word “**Kaleo**”. In practical terms, fruit represent good works, a thought, attitude or action that God values because it glorifies Him.

You produce inner fruit when you allow God to nurture in you a new Christ-like quality. You produce outward fruit when you allow God to work through you to bring Him glory. This would certainly include sharing your faith with others.

The Apostles saw every area of life as an opportunity to produce fruit. For instance Paul wrote, “God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.” (2 Corinthians 9:8).

Jesus shows how important and valuable fruit bearing is when He says, "I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain." (John 15:16) The fruit you produce is your only permanent deposit in heaven.

Repentance is one of the main themes of the Bible. The word "REPENTANCE" is used 110 times from Genesis 6:6 to Revelation 16:11. The original Greek word for "Repentance" is "Metanoia" which stands for "a real change of mind and attitude towards sin and its cause, not merely the consequences of it" as used in Matthew 3:8 and Luke 24:27. Repentance prepares a soul for remission of sin. Some examples of repentance found in the Bible include the following:

- The brothers of Joseph (Genesis 50:17)
- David (psalm 51)
- The people of Nineveh (Jonah 3)
- The prodigal son (Luke 18:9-14)
- The Publican (Luke 15:11-24) and
- Peter (Mathew 26:75).

The Synod theme therefore indicate that Christians are called to live a life that shows that they have actually repented of their sins and are now behaving in a way that is pleasing to God. We are called to produce fruit that is deserving and consistent with our repentance. In order to throw more light on the theme it is pertinent to ask some questions.

- Who does the calling?
- Why are we called?
- What type of fruit should a Christian produce?
- What are the things that hinder us from producing fruit?
- Are there Biblical examples of people who have succeeded in producing fruit in keeping with repentance?
- How can one produce fruit in keeping with one's repentance?
- What are the benefits or rewards for the Christian that produces fruit?

Answers to these and other questions are bound to give us more insight to a better understanding of the theme.

2. Who Calls?

The Bible makes it clear that God always takes the initiative in calling people.

- God called Abraham to go to the promise land (Genesis 12:1).
- Moses was called by God to go and deliver the Israelites from Egypt (Exodus 3:10).
- Gideon was called to save Israel from the Midianites who were harassing them (Judges 6:14).
- Elisha was called to replace Elijah the Prophet (1Kings 19:19).
- Isaiah was called to go and send a message to the people of Israel (Isaiah 6:8)
- And Paul was divinely called to be a Minister of the gospel (Acts 26:16).

What is the Purpose of God when He calls?

Is it for the well being of God or for the good of the person being called? The Prophet Jeremiah is of the view that it is for the good of the person God call (Jeremiah 29:11). Indeed God has a plan for the life of each individual believer. His call does not only involve a wonderful purpose of us throughout eternity, but we also have an expression of that call upon the earth now.

Alfred P. Gibbs in his book “the Preacher and his Preaching” emphatically asserts that “the authority of the call is the prerogative of Christ alone, for He calls whomsoever He wills.”

3. Why are we called?

Whenever God calls us He has a reason or purpose for the call.

- (i) **To Be Separated to Him:** When God calls a sinner, it is so that the sinner will repent and live to please Him. This involves a position transfer. The Sinner is called out of darkness into god’s marvelous light (1Peter 2:9). The person becomes separated unto God. Yes, God has emphatically proclaimed that those who were not His people shall be called the children of the living God (Romans 9:26). Such people are separated to the family of God.
- (ii) **To Fulfill His Purpose:** The salvation of a Christian is not based on anything the person has done. It is actually dependent on the grace of God. (Ephesians 2:8-9). Similarly, Christians are saved and called to holy living not because of what they have done but because of God’s own purpose and grace (2 Timothy 1:8-9). God has a purpose for us to fulfill here on earth and later in eternity. What a joy to actually know the purpose for which God has called us, and to fulfill it. How wonderful it will be if we can dedicate ourselves as Paul did to fulfilling God’s purpose in our lives by pressing forward towards the mark ... (Philippians 3:14).
- (iii) **To Produce Fruit That Remains:** People that are called by God are chosen by Him, Such people are ordained by God to go and produce fruit. Jesus emphasized the need for every believer to produce fruit in John 15. If the believer is fruitful he is pruned to produce more fruit. However, it is pertinent to draw our attention to the type of fruit that God requires his children to produce. It is a fruit that is in keeping with repentance and therefore remains (John 15:15).

1. What Type of Fruit should a Christian Produce?

The Synod theme does not leave us in doubt of the type of fruit that a child of God is to produce. It states that it is a fruit that is in keeping with repentance. Is it possible for someone to produce a fruit that negates his claims? There is no doubt that the possibility exists. Hence we need to examine the type of fruit of professing Christian produces. Is it or is it not in keeping with the person’s repentance? Let us consider the characteristics of a fruit that is in keeping with repentance. The qualities of such a fruit include the following:

- (i) **It is an Outcome of a Changed Mind, heart and Will:** True repentance involves a change of our mind (Mathew 21:28-29), our heart (2 Corinthians 7:9-10; Isaiah 57:15) and will (Luke 15:18-20). Jesus stressed the need for repentance in His sermon (Cf. Mark 15, Mathew 4:17; Luke 5:32). The Pillars of the first century church emphasized repentance. Peter in his second epistle, chapter three and verse nine notes “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness but is longsuffering to us ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” Paul asserts that “a godly sorrow leads to repentance...” (2Corinthians 7:10). Repentance is the start of a walk with God. It is the departure point with the old life style and the beginning of a new life in Christ. There is not Christianity without repentance, a total, decisive, once and for all turning away from all known sins and turning to God.

- (ii) **It Emphasizes Restitution:** Restitution is an act of restoring what has been wrongfully taken. It is a bold step taken to right an earlier wrong done. It is only those that have truly repented that can contemplate or embark on restitution. Let me emphasize here that most sins committed by me are against God, as well as against our neighbours. It seems to me that the only way to have a conscience void of offence toward man is the restoration of wrongs, damages, or losses suffered. By restitution you make your ways right before man and with repentance, you come into right relationship with God. This Christian practice has Biblical support (Cf. Genesis 20:7; Exodus 24:1-4 Matthew 5:23-24).
- (iii) **It is an Embodiment of Good Works:** Although we are not saved by our good works, good works are the expected fruit of true repentance. This is highlighted severally in the Scriptures (Cf. Matthew 3:8; Acts 26:20; 2Timothy 3:17 and 1Peter 2:12). Surely we are created in Christ Jesus to produce good works (Ephesians 2:10).
- (iv) **It easily Forgives no Matter What:** Any person who produces fruit in keeping with repentance understands the need to forgive others. He goes a long way to forgive even his enemies (Matthew 6:12-15; Mark 11:25-26; Luke 6:37 and Ephesians 4:32).
- (v) **It shows Evidence of the fruit of the Spirit:** As opposed to the works of the flesh, the Christian that produces fruits in keeping with repentance usually manifests the fruits of the Spirit in speech and conduct. Let us closely examine the fruit of the Holy Spirit. This one fruit is made up of nine components namely: Love, Joy, Peace, Longsuffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness and Temperance (Galatians 5:22-23).
 - (a) **Love:** The Greek word for divine love is “AGAPE” which is a strong, ardent, tender, compassionate, devotion to the well-being of someone. A person manifesting this fruit seeks for the good of God and his fellow human beings. He is patient, kind, generous, humble, courteous, unselfish, righteous and sincere (1 Corinthians 13:4-8). Kenneth E. Hagin asserts in his book titled “Growing up Spiritually: that this fruit of the Spirit is a fruit that grows in your life because of the life of Christ within”.
 - (b) **Joy:** The original Greek word is “CHARA” which means the emotional excitement, gladness, delight over blessings received or expected for self and for others. This attribute is the hallmark of anyone who produces fruit in keeping with repentance (Luke 19:6) even when undergoing difficulties (2 Corinthians 7:4). The British writer and Oxford Professor, C.S. Lewis said his conversion from atheism was purely intellectual. He studied the claims of Christ and saw that the truth was on Christ’s side. The only honest thing he could say was, “Here I am Lord, if you’ll have me”. But Lewis added that later on he was surprised by joy. This joy of the Lord comes from a dedication and commitment to the will and plan of God for the child of God.
 - (c) **Peace:** This component of the fruit of the Holy Spirit is derived from the Greek word “EIRENE” which stands for the state of quietness, rest, repose, harmony, order and security in the midst of turmoil, strife and temptations. Since God is the author of peace and Christ is the Prince of peace, it stands to reason that the person who manifests this fruit must have encountered Jesus Christ. This peace of God helps us believe God will supply all our need “according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus”. (Philippians 4:19). It helps us keep our trust in God so we rest in Him in the midst of the storms of life.

- (d) **Longsuffering:** The Greek word “MAKROTHUMIA” means patient, endurance, to bear long with the frailties, offences, injuries and provocations of others, without mourning, repining or resentment. Frankly speaking I am of the opinion that his fruit component only be produced by a Christian who produces fruit that is keeping with repentance (Cf. Colossians 1:10-11). The Holy Spirit helps us to be patient and even tempered even toward those that deliberately try to upset or harm us. This fruit of the spirit helps us to go the extra mile, turn the second cheek, endure insult and bear with those that ridicule us.
- (e) **Gentleness:** The word is derived from the Greek word “CHRESTOTES” which means a disposition to be gentle, soft spoken, kind, even tempered, cultured and refined in character and conduct. In our modern age where most people are always in a hurry to catch up with one appointment, meeting or business transaction, this quality seems to have been missing. Nevertheless, this fruit is sympathetic, sensitive to people’s needs, and problems. It gives a soft answer that turns away wrath and avoids stirring up angry outbursts of temper (Proverbs 15:1).
- (f) **Goodness:** The Greek word “AGATHOSUNE” represents the state of being good, kind, virtuous, benevolent, generous and God like in life and conduct. The Bible makes it clear that man of himself cannot do good (Psalms 14:3). However, after being born of the Spirit, the Christian can be endued with this attribute. It manifests in helping others and meeting their real needs.
- (g) **Faith:** In Greek the word “FAITH” is written as “PISTIS” which means the loving, divinely implanted, acquired and created principles of inward and wholehearted confidence, assurance, trust and reliance of God and all that He says. Simply put faith as total trust and confidence in what God has promise. The Christian life is a walk of faith since without faith one cannot please God (Hebrew 11:6). Every Christian needs to manifest this fruit so as to have meaningful relation with God.
- (h) **Meekness:** This word is derived from the Greek word “PRAOTES” which means the disposition to be gentle, kind, indulgent, even balance in temper and passions, and patient in suffering injuries without felling a spirit of revenge. God helps the meek person (Psalms 147:6) and make him a blessing to others (Galatians 6:1). No wonder only true believers can produce this fruit that was manifest in the life of Jesus Christ (Isaiah 53:7; Mathew 11:28-30).
- (i) **Temperance:** The Greek word “ENKRATEIA” means self-control; a moderation in the indulgence of the appetites and passions. Daniel exhibited this wonderful fruits while living as exile in Babylon, He had his friend had this fruit and God blessed them as they refused to eat the King’s food (Daniel 1:8f). How wonderful our Christian witness would be if we coveted this attribute. Let me at this juncture say that temperance is not mere moderation. Rather, it is a self-control that results from self-discipline. The corresponding verb is used in 1Corinthians 9:25 of athletes who must exercise self-control in everything if they want to win. This fruit helps the Christian to put to death all the desires, Passions. Appetites and tendencies of the flesh.

2. **What are the Things that Hinder us from producing Fruit?** The following obstacles hinder a Christian from producing fruit in line with repentance.

- (i) **Unbelief:** This is the act of not exercising faith in what God has said. It leads to doubt and blocks the production of fruit in the life of a Christian. In Matthew 21:21a) Jesus Christ highlights the undesirable attribute of unbelief in the life of a believer. James the Apostle also is of the same view (James 1:6-8).
- (ii) **Lack of the Word of God:** The amount of the word of God in the life of a believer is a measure of the spiritual growth of that believer. Hosea the prophet puts it this way and I quote, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...” (Hosea 4:6a) Mark 11:24 says “You err because you know not the scriptures.” In the parable of the Sower, Jesus explained, “the seed is the word of God” (Luke 8:11). God’s will for our lives is fruitfulness (Psalms 1:3) because the righteous is said to be like a tree planted, cultivated and well watered. The Apostle Paul boldly advised Timothy to study the word of God in order to be approved of Him.
- (iii) **Prayerlessness:** In an age where people are so busy chasing after money, position, title, etc. Conscientious and effective praying becomes difficult if not impossible. To pray is not only to win but to bear fruit. The time we spend with the Lord in prayer can release a great, life – changing and historic power to a needy word. A prayerless Christian is a defeated Christian who definitely cannot bear fruit in keeping with repentance. Dr. lee Robertson in his book titled “For Preachers only” said, “it is a sin not to pray and how often we have sinned against God”. He suggest three major reasons for prayerlessness and I quote.

 “it may be we haven’t prayed because we are **selfish** we think only of ourselves, not of others. It may be we have failed to pray because of **forgetfulness** we are so busy with the things around us, we don’t take time to pray. It may be we didn’t pray because of **foolish pride** we have an idea we can work it out for ourselves and so we didn’t call upon God.”
- (iv) **Lack of Generosity:** The Bible teaches that Christians can give willingly and cheerfully, from a spirit of generosity (Exodus 25:2; 2Corinthians 9:6, 7). One cannot produce fruit if one does not give God does not measure our giving by the amount we give, rather He rewards us according to what is left after we give. No wonder Jesus said the very little amount given by the Widow was greater than all the others because it was “all she had”. (Luke 21:1)
- (v) We need to be generous when we give for the things of God. It is a proof of our love for God and our fruitfulness. To refuse to be a faithful and fruitful steward by giving is an act of robbery and rebellion towards God.
- (vi) **Not Abiding in Christ:** The danger of fruitlessness has been expressly highlighted by Jesus in John 15:4 and I quote “Remain united to me, and I will remain united to you. A branch cannot bear fruit by itself; it can do so only if it remains in the Vine. In the same way you cannot bear fruit unless you remain in me.” (GNB). It is a fact that only Christian that does not abide or get connected to Christ will not be able to produce fruit. We need to do all in our power to always ensure that we remain attached to Jesus to ensure our fruitfulness.

3. Are there Biblical Examples of People who have Succeeded in Producing Fruit?

The answer is a resounding yes as we shall see from the following examples.

- (i) **Zacchaeus:** According to Luke 19:1-10, a man named Zacchaeus has a life changing encounter with the Lord Jesus. Like all Publicans, he had become very rich by oppression and extortion of money from the Jews. He was an avowed and certified sinner. However, after his encounter with Jesus, his life changed. In a singular act, he repented of his sins and received salvation. Although God had forgiven him, Jesus had something against him. Listen to the heartbeat of a changed Zacchaeus, “Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor.” This is a commitment of the present reality of his changed life not of his past. He continued, “if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him four fold” What a sign of changed personality.
- (ii) **Zacchaeus showed that repentance is more than shedding tears.** It requires that one has to produce evidence of one’s repentance.
- (iii) **The Samaritan Woman:** This woman obviously had led a very sinful life but her story did not end on that sad note (John 4:7f). After having a direct encounter with Jesus Christ, her life became beautiful. She began to produce fruit by calling on others to come and meet the Lord; and the Bible records that she was very successful in doing so (John 4:29-30). How many of today’s Christians would have done what she did?
- (iv) **Nicodemus:** Information available indicate that this man was a Jewish Rabbi, member of the Sanhedrin, very wealthy and a ruler of the Jews. Nevertheless, he recognized his need of Jesus and went to see Him to get more insight on things of God. Christ used the opportunity to inform Nicodemus of the necessity of the new birth experience (John 3:1f). After his meeting with Jesus Christ the Bible records that Nicodemus produced fruit keeping with repentance. For one thing, he testified for Christ (John 7:50-51) and again he did service for Christ (John 19:19). It is indeed possible to produce fruit in keeping with repentance. We have numerous examples of people who had produced fruit in keeping with repentance; such as Stephen, Peter Paul, James, the thief on the cross etc.

4. **How can We produce Fruit in Keeping with Repentance?** Before any tree can produce fruit, it has to be planted and grow to maturity. Similarly for someone to bear fruit in keeping with repentance he has to meet the following requirement.

- (i) **Get the New Birth Experience:** This foundational truth was canvassed by Christ depth in this discussion with a Jewish ruler Nicodemus. In this experience a person receives a new holy nature from God which is an essential requirement to be part of God’s holy Kingdom. We become born of the Spirit as opposed to being born of the flesh. We become born of God in contrast to being born of man (John 1:13). Watchman Nee in his book titled “The Spiritual Man” has this note of warning concerning those who do not have the new birth experience and I quote: “When a man is regenerated he obtains God’s life. This is the minimum for every believer. Whoever has not believed in the death of the Lord Jesus and received a supernatural life which he originally did not have, regardless of how zealously he may be progressing in the areas of religion, morality and learning, is still a dead man in God’s sight. All who do not have God’s own life are dead.” Our Igbo hymnbook (**Ekpere na Abụ**) contains several greatly inspired hymns on this subject. Take for example Abụ 258 that asks the challenging question, “Have you been to the Lord for the cleansing power?” Even Abu 266 emphasizes the new birth

experience as it tells the story of “A ruler once came to Jesus by night.” All these go to show the necessity of the new birth experience.

- (ii) **Be a Spiritual Man:** By this I mean that anybody who wishes to produce fruit in keeping with repentance should be subject to the rule of the Holy Spirit. A spiritual man is someone whose mind, will and emotion are completely under the control of the Holy Spirit. The spiritual man has come to know the intimacy of the Holy Spirit as he is unveiled in the word. We need to become conscious of the Holy Spirit’s indwelling presence, and learn to walk in the light of the Word. Kenneth E. Hagin writing on this subject said and I quote: “The Spiritual man is the one whom the Word has gained the ascendancy over his mind and over his body. It has brought him into harmony with the will of God...”

Again, David Yonggi Cho in his book titled “The Holy Spirit: My Senior partner” highlights the need for the Christian to intimately relate with the Holy Spirit and I quote: “Fervently fellowship with the living Holy Spirit, Without it, the Church naturally becomes cold, worship becomes mechanical and faith loses the burning passion which gives a depth to our whole personality.”

- (iii) **Abide in Christ:** Jesus Christ taught this spiritual principle in John 15:5 and I quote: “I am the vine, you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.”

The vast majority of trees have branches and it is on these branches that the fruits are found. It is therefore a great importance that the branch is firmly attached on the stem of the tree for it to produce fruit. Without the stem the branch will not exist. To be a fruit producing Christian, we need to abide or remain in Christ at all times. Failure to do so will lead to unfruitfulness and destruction.

- (iv) **Live a Holy Life:** To some people living a life of holiness seems impossible but god commands His people, in the NIV, “Be just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do.” (1Peter 1:15). To some Christians to live a life of holiness is to dress in a certain way devoid of ear rings, necklace or make-up. Such people are very concerned with the outward appearance; but is God really concerned about the outward man or the inner man? Let Samuel the Prophet provide the answer and I quote: “But the Lord said to Samuel, do not consider his appearance or his height, man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” (1Samuel 16:7). Living a holy life is to be separated from all sin and immoral living a consecration to the same end in life that God is consecrated to. It permeates the personal moral cleanness of life and conduct. It is evidenced by purity of life and morals, not by outward appearance and the customary adoring which make a person more beautiful and a better representation of true religion.

- (v) **Obey the Great Commission:** Just prior to Christ’s ascension, he issued the Great Commission to His disciples and I quote: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age: (Matthew 28:19-20). The major command in this directive of Jesus is for his disciples to make new disciples or to produce fruits for Him. How can a Christian obey the Greet Commission in this age? Stan Toler in his book titled “The

people principle: transforming lay persons into leaders” makes a case for the Church today to adopt the use of personal evangelism and I share that viewpoint. Personal evangelism is always a one-to-one relationship, effective only as we build bridges of good interaction with the person we are leading to Christ. Evangelism becomes effective when every member of the church is reaching out and winning souls for Christ. We need to teach our congregations that personal evangelism is an essential part of Christian living. The world renowned Evangelist Billy Graham in his book titled “The Billy Graham Christian Worker’s handbook” said and I quote:

“Only by a life of Obedience to the Voice of the Spirit, by a daily denying of self, by full dedication to Christ, and by constant fellowship with Him, are we enabled to live a Godly life and an influential life in this present ungodly world.”

Let us mobilize our congregations to be concerned about evangelism. We cannot pretend to love God and profess that we are Obedient to Him if we are not involved in the Church’s mission to reach those who do not know Christ. Every Anglican member should obey the great Commission by sharing Jesus with all. Let us begin to step outside our Comfort Zones to share the good news of Christ with all by every possible means.

- (vi) **Put a Premium of the Cultivation of the Fruit of the Spirit:** Although a Christian begins to manifest some measure of Christian virtues immediately after repentance, let us not lose sight of the fact that further and continuous fruitfulness depends on cultivation. Although a tree produces fruit from its own life, the branches must be pruned and the fruit sheltered and protected from insects and wild birds. Since we reap what we sow, those who fail to cultivate their inner spiritual life will fail to reap a bountiful harvest of Christian virtues. Let us not neglect the cultivation of our Christian life. A neglected garden grows weeds and soon becomes fruitless.

You must repent if your fruits have become rotten due to neglect or carelessness. Do not depend on the fruit you produce in yester years. Let your fruit be fresh so that those that come in contact with you will see the freshness of your fruit, taste its sweetness and giving glory to God for your life.

Therefore, let us put a premium on the cultivation of the fruit of the spirit in our lives. Every church must begin to emphasize fruit bearing in the lives of her members. The totality of our members should be taught on the importance of producing fruit in keeping with repentance. For the 21st Century to move Forward, Christian virtues must abound in her. No matter the amount of success enjoyed by the church, she should not lose sight of the importance of real Christian character. Christian workers and leaders should be examples to the flock. The higher we go in the cultivation of Christian virtues, the more wholesome our impact on the generality of the member. Do not despair if you discover now that you are fruitless. Let the Lord restore you, prune you and make you fruitful in Jesus name Amen.

(vii) What are the Benefits or Rewards for the Christian that Produces Fruit?

- (a) **He Avoids God’s Disciplinary Interventions:** Bruce Wilkinson in his book titled “Secrets of the Vine” highlights how God intervenes in the life of a barren Christian and I quote, “If your life consistently bears no fruit, God will intervene to discipline you. If necessary, he will use painful measures to bring you to repentance.” A child of God who

produces fruit will definitely avoid God's disciplinary measures reserved for the unproductive Christian (John 15:2).

- (b) **He Attracts God's Pruning to produce more Fruit:** If your life bears some fruit, then God will intervene to prune you. If necessary he will risk your misunderstanding of His methods and motives. His purpose is for you to put away immature commitments and lesser priorities to make room for greater abundance to His glory. Pruning is the vine dresser's single most important technique for ensuring a plentiful harvest. In pruning, God asks you to let go of things that keep you from His kingdom purposes and your ultimate good. This kind of pruning goes beyond rearranging priorities to the heart of what defines us – the people we love, the possessions we cling to, our deep sense of personal rights. They are the very ears God must rule if we are to bear more fruit.
- (c) **He Gets Invitation to Abide More Deeply With Him in order to Bear much Fruit:** God's purpose for a Christian is not for him to do more for God but that he will choose to be more with God. It is only by remaining and staying closely connected to Him that one can enjoy the most rewarding friendship with God and experience the greatest abundance of His glory. If we are not abiding in Him, we wither and die and become of no spiritual use. However, if we stay connected to him, if we draw spiritual nourishment from Him. If we allow the power that flows through Him to flow through us, then nothing will stop us from producing much fruit. The invitation to abide more deeply comes from Christ to the fruit producing Christian (John 15:9). The challenge in abiding in Him is always to break out from dutiful activities to a living, flourishing relationship with God. Someone may wonder how working less for God in order to spend more time with Him can give rise to "much fruit" in your life. Reason is that when you abide with Him, God rewards you by supernaturally multiplying your efforts. Let me point out that abiding in Christ carries with it a promise of answered prayer. Jesus said, "if you abide in me and my words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit." (John 15:7, 8). Later, in verse 16, Jesus repeats the promise, Nothing pleases God more than when we ask for what He wants to give. Let us begin to spend more time with Him. Let us allow priorities, passions and purposes to motivate us. Then we will ask for things that are closest to His heart and will bear much fruit.

He lives in Joyful Abundance: Undoubtedly the most startling symbol of abundance in the Old Testament is the snapshot of what the spies found in the promised land as recorded in Numbers 13:23 and I quote: "They came to the valley of Eschol and there cut down a branch with one cluster of grape; they carried it between two of them on a pole."

To my mind, one cluster of grape that is carried on a pole by two men represents a bumper harvest or a snapshot of supernatural abundance. I believe that it is the portrait of fruitfulness that God has in store for His people. Such a person lives in joyful abundance. After all, Jesus made a wonderful promise to His disciples that night in the vineyard, and I quote: "These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may remain in you, and that your joy be full," (John 15:11). Joyful abundance is for Christians that produce fruit. You were created for a life mission of abundance for God but you will have to co-operate with God's ways and respond to him in obedience and trust.

CONCLUSION:

The call to produce fruit in keeping with repentance is a call to service. Christians are saved to serve. Every believer must therefore be involved in serving God. There is a place for every child of God in this work; and in God's Vine-yard, no work is considered small. The call to produce fruit is also a call to living life of holiness and purity of heart. It is a call to the church to rise up to her calling and intensify her efforts to evangelism. We are to go out and sow precious seed of the word of God in the hearts of our fellow men. We cannot do these things without the Holy Spirit. Indeed, we cannot do without the Holy Spirit in our Christian Service. Our preaching will be ineffective, our counseling inadequate and every other service will be unproductive expect done by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Let me challenge all of us to heed the call to produce fruit, more fruit and much fruit as we dedicate ourselves to walk with the lord, decide to do His will, consistently abide in Him and wholeheartedly trust and obey Him. If you are willing to accept the challenge please join me as I conclude with the 19th century song writer Mr. D.B. Towner's song titled "Trust and Obey".

SS & S 642 TRUST AND OBEY

When we walk with the Lord
In the light of His word
What a glory He sheds on our way
While we do His good will
He abides with us still
And with all who will trust and obey

Trust and Obey
For there is no other way
To be happy in Jesus
But to trust and obey...

May the Almighty God bless, protect, guide and make you fruitful to His praise and glory in Jesus name Amen.

Thank you for patient listening.

The Rt. Rev. Dr. J. C. Ilonuba (JP)
Bishop of Nsukka)

ADMISSIONS AND CONFIRMATION:

Within the period in review, the following candidates have been admitted to different Church organizations and others confirmed.

Girl's Guild	-	232
Women's Guild	-	338
Mother's Union	-	99
C.F.F	-	109
Confirmation	-	632 Males 1478 Females
Total confirmation	-	2110

Admissions and Confirmation 9th October 2005 1st October 2006.

S/N	Church/parish	GG	WG	MU	CFF	CONFIRMATION		TOTAL
						MALES	FEMALES	
1.	St. Stephen's Eha-Alumona	5	31	5	5	44	106	150
2.	St. Thomas' Aku	17	8	3	12	37	84	121
3.	St. John's Edem-Ani	1	10	-	2	11	29	40
4.	St. Philip's Ozalla	5	7	2	1	28	57	85
5.	St. John's, Itchi	17	5	1	2	14	38	52
6.	St. mark's Ohodo	10	19	4	1	19	39	58
7.	All Saints Obool-Afor	-	8	1	4	17	35	52
8.	St. Paul's Uda	2	12	6	6	10	38	48
9.	St. Mary's Iheakpu-Awka	32	24	27	26	68	120	188
10.	St. Mary's Mbu	7	27	5	-	21	55	76
11.	St. Matthew's Mgbuji	13	54	6	1	42	140	182
12.	Federal Government College Lejja	-	-	-	-	-	89	89
13.	St. Luke's Nsukka	35	14	5	8	38	63	101
14.	St. Bartholomew's, Amachalla	15	10	1	1	20	70	90
15.	St. Paul's Cathedral Nsukka	7	15	7	7	37	56	93
16.	St. Philip's Eha-Amufu	17	28	5	1	45	70	115
17.	Christ Church Chapel UNN	-	8	9	-	33	32	65
18.	St. Stephen's Ogrute	12	14	2	13	57	164	221
19.	St. Mark's Abbi	7	9	4	1	18	31	49
20.	St. Luke's Amufie	5	16	-	8	25	48	73
21.	St. Bartholomew's, Obimo	1	8	-	7	18	39	57
22.	Emmanuel Church Alor-Uno	14	10	6	3	10	32	42
23.	St. Cyprian's Secondary Schools	7	-	-	-	20	43	63
		232	338	99	109	632	1478	2110

APPENDIX I

THE FIRST NATIONAL ANGLICAN CONFERENCE ON WELFARE OF THE NATION, THE ROLE OF THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION IN NATION BUILDING HELD FROM WEDNESDAY 28TH TO FRIDAY 30TH JUNE 2006

Venue was the cathedral Church of The Advent, Gwarinpa, Abuja, and it attracted the House of Bishops, House of clergy, and the laity as well as Anglican friends.

The focus was on the re-establishment of the Anglican Church from the solid foundation laid by its forebears on the ethos of morality evidenced by hard work, dedication, merit, patriotism, discipline, orderly growth and development among others.

Various papers were presented by experts in education, health, politics, economics, the media, youths, moral values, history of the Church among others.

- The church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion should not be seen to associate itself with the present day decay in the society. It should not and cannot limit itself to evangelizing efforts, management of parishes and mere supervision of liturgy and doctrines of the church, for the decay in the society demands more sustained effort to stem and reverse the evil now ravaging the nation.
- To this end, there is the need for the Church to return to its history to appreciate what had been, ascertain what and where we are, to enable it predict where it is going.
- The Church should continue to speak out without fear or favour on ways and manner to achieve the objective.
- In the quest to redress the ugly trend in the country, peace should be uppermost, for if there is no peace there will be no prosperity.
- Regarding calls for return of schools to the church, a committee should be constituted to examine the merits and demerits of returning schools to the church vis-à-vis expressed fears and reports of successes recorded in some schools already returned to the church, and make recommendations.
- For the church to lead by example it needs to do some serious and honest work about its internal unity.
- Medical routine checks should be conducted for church members with emphasis on blood pressure, while recreation activities and regular physical exercises should be encouraged. Physical exercises can come in the form of singing and dancing in the church.
- That the church should continue to pursue and provide quality education and health care delivery for which it is known for with a view to breaking the shackles of ignorance and poverty.

- That the church should as a matter of policy implement economic empowerment programmes and target specific sectors of the economy to invest surplus funds, with a view to supporting expansion and charity related projects.
- Encourage women especially the girl-child to acquire knowledge e.g. formal training/education on vocational skill acquisition to enable them manage better and possibly prevent matrimonial dislocation and conjugal disharmonies arising from poverty and over-dependence on their men. Learn to speak out when human rights are subverted and violated in the nation and against societal ills that hamper true nation-building as well as participate in partisan politics.
- Anglican women were encouraged to channel their energies properly to the service of God and humanity.
- The church should endeavour to maintain its holy status, by rejecting and discouraging the donation of ill-gotten wealth to the church.
- The clergy should be given better training, not only in divinity, but also in the social sciences. They should be more properly paid and catered for, to keep them from mortgaging their consciences.
- The church should establish a scholarship fund to assist brilliant but indigent students.
- The issue of endowment fund should be encouraged and taken more seriously for the church to have strong influence in the society. The Church must of necessity be economically self-reliant.
- That the church should invest more on youth development.

COMMUNIQUÉ:

- That members of the Anglican Church must be fully involved in seeking elective offices come 2007 elections.
- That the six geo-political zones with their cultural peculiarities must be encouraged to blend like the colours of the rainbow in sharing, and mutually enjoying human and natural resources.
- That Christian media practitioners must remain in the vanguard of nation building as a flag bearer in shining the light of Christ, presenting researched and balanced reports and promoting the well being of the various groups in Nigeria.
- The media should remain resolute in its various public enlightenment campaigns and advocacy, propagate ideals and programmes of government on good corporate responsibility, governance, human rights, anti-graft and reform process, as well as shun corruption and political influences.
- The church should be actively involved in policy advocacy in areas of resource allocation, encourage and reward performance, promote a transparent regulatory system, accountability and effective enforcement of laws, rules and regulations
- On marriage, the conference agreed that Marriage between a man and a woman is the official position of the Anglican Communion, and confirmed by its laws. And condemned in its entirety homosexuality and the same sex marriage.

- The present election time table was seen as having loopholes that could encourage election malpractice and therefore needs to be changed. The Church should bring this to the notice of the appropriate quarters.
- There is an urgent need to further develop and maintain the nation's health facilities to meet current challenges of health care delivery.
- That the church should join in the ongoing fight by the government against corruption and inculcate good norms and values by condemning acts that are inconsistent with the Christian faith.

It was adopted that the conference should be held once in three years.

Justice A. G. Karibi Whyte
Chairman Planning Committee

Dr. Femi Ogunsanya
Secretary Planning Committee

The Most Revd. Peter J. Akinola, CON, D.
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria.

APPENDIX II

MESSAGE TO THE NATION ARISING FROM THE POLITICAL AWARENESS SEMINAR HELD FOR THE BISHOPS OF THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) ON WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER, 13, 2006, AT ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL CHURCH, DIOBU, PORT HARCOURT, RIVER STATE.

INTRODUCTION:

The Bishops of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) met in a seminar on Political Awareness in the country on the 13th day of September, 2006 at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul's Diobu, Port-Harcourt in the Diocese of Niger Delta north. After a very deep prayerful exposition and exhaustive deliberation on the current political process, as well as the security demand, mobilization and laws towards a successful general election in the country next year, issues the following statements:

1. COMMENDATION:

The House of Bishops highly commends the leadership of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) for putting in place such an educative, informative and brainstorming seminar for the house of bishops at this crucial stage of our nation's history and development. It also places on record, the contributions of our Resource Persons: Prof Maurice M. Iwu, Chairman Independent Electoral Commission, Mr. Sunday Ehindero, Inspector General of Police. Alhaji Mohammed Faruk, Director General, National Orientation Agency and Hon. Austin Opara, Deputy Speaker, Federal House of Representatives, towards the success of the seminar. The first three personalities not only attended in persons, but also made remarkable contributions that have made the Church and her leaders better informed on the ongoing electoral process in the country.

2. INEC AND 2007 GENERAL ELECTIONS:

The Church of Nigeria admires with great enthusiasm, the zeal, commitment and determination of the Independent National Electoral Commission to conduct a very credible election in the country come 2007. It however notes with sadness that since independence, the electoral process in Nigeria has been characterized by massive rigging, political violence and thuggery, politics of bitterness and imposition of candidates among others. It also decries the fact that party politics, sentiments and quest for political power and public office, are not a means of bringing about development, but as vehicles of personal aggrandizement and disbursement of patronages to supporters and cronies. Synod enjoins INEC to be resolute and steadfast in its determination to make the forthcoming general elections a watershed for an enduring democratic culture in Nigeria.

3. THE NIGERIAN POLICE AND THE DEMOCRATIC ELECTORAL PROCESS:

The house of Bishops underscore the crucial but central role of the Nigerian Police in ensuring the success of the democratic electoral process in this country. It is however inconsolably worried that the Nigerian Police is not only ill-equipped, but also poorly motivated for their job. That the Nigerian Police has no functional aircraft for effective surveillance and monitoring coupled with the fact that armed robbers and social miscreants have stronger fire-power is not only a threat, but poses a real danger to the maintenance of peace, order, security and good governance in this country. It therefore calls on the Federal Government to take urgent steps at repositioning the Nigerian Police for effective discharge of their constitutional obligations by ensuring not only the

provision of modern security gadgets and apparatus, but also an improved welfare package that will adequately motivate them for their very delicate job.

4. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND THE SUCCESS OF THE 2007 GENERAL ELECTIONS:

The Bishops note with satisfaction that the present government of the Federation is leaving no stone unturned in an effort to engender a true democratic culture that will ensure the realization of the dreams of our founding fathers at independence. Worthy of special mention are the various legislations being put in place to ensure free and fair elections, setting of limits for election expenses by various candidates from the office of the President to Ward counselors, and the unrelenting war against corruption in the country. It urges Mr. President and his team to remain resolute until Nigeria truly becomes the motherland of our dream.

5. POLITICS WITHOUT BITTERNESS:

The House of Bishops reminds Nigerians that politics is about sharing of ideas. It is therefore very wrong and ungodly to allow bitterness and acrimony to rise to the level of contemplating, planning and actual assassination of perceived political opponents. It reminds our brothers and sisters of partisan politics of the truism that “whatever a man sows, that he will reap” and warns those who see politics as a do or die affair to save the successive generations of their families from the curse that goes with the shedding of innocent blood.

May God bless us all.

The Most Rev. Peter J. Akinola CON D.D.

Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria.