

**PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS PRESENTED TO THE THIRD SESSION OF THE
FOURTH SYNOD OF THE DIOCESE OF NSUKKA ON MONDAY 31ST OCTOBER
2005, AT ST. PETER'S CHURCH OVOKO BY HIS LORDSHIP – RT. REVD. DR.
JONAH CHUKWUEMEKA ILONUBA**

PROTOCOL:

*My Lord Bishop/Bishops
The Hon. Chancellor Sir Barrister Obiora Nzewi
The Registrar Sir Hon. Justice F.I.N. Ngwu
The Legal Secretary – Barrister Chike Ngwu (KSP)
The Justice Pearl Enejere
Other Legal Luminaries here present
Venerable Archdeacons
Canons of the Cathedral and Clergy
The President Mothers' Union, Women's Guild, Young Wives and Girls' Guild
Knights of St. Paul and Ladies
Synod Delegates
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.*

GREETINGS:

Beloved people of God, brothers and sisters in Christ, first, I must thank God for giving me yet another opportunity to stand before you to address this assembly of the citizens of heaven.

We always thank God for all of you and never cease mentioning you in our Diocesan Cycle of prayers. "We continually remember before our God and Father, your work produced by faith, your labour prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." (1Thess.1:2-3).

I welcome all of you who have come from different places to share fellowship with one another. The Synod affords us the opportunity to come together to reflect and assess our performances on Diocesan, Archdeaconry and Parish levels and to learn from one another for improvement. Let us therefore have open minds so that we will go from here back to our different churches with new ideas and renewed zeal and have something to share with those at home who did not have the opportunity to be here. I like to appreciate the work of the Planning Committee of this Synod both on Diocesan and Archdeaconry levels, for their preparations and contacts made to see that this Synod takes place. I thank those who have been specially invited to perform different assignments in the course of this Synod to make for its success, the Chief Launchers and Co-Launchers who started from yesterday to carry out their assignment. It is our prayer that our God who remains faithful to his promises will replenish the source from which you have given to support his work. May you never lack in Jesus' name, Amen.

At our arrival on Saturday we paid a courtesy call on ----- And we thank him for welcoming us into this community and pray that God will bless his tenure and use him to bring peace and progress among his people.

I cannot forget to thank the Archdeacon and Clergy of the Archdeaconry for their commitment and evangelistic zeal in seeing that the gospel message is being proclaimed in power to all the nooks and crannies of the Archdeaconry and beyond.

During our last Synod here at Ovoko in 1998 there was an attempt to build a church hall and today the work on the hall has progressed but after seven years one would have thought that a church of this nature would have completed the hall and start new projects.

The Church in which we are today has become grossly inadequate to accommodate those who worship in it and time has come for a bigger and more modern church to be built. I thank God that idea is agitating your mind and the sooner you start it, the better, but first see that this hall is completed in the shortest possible time. I call on all the sons and daughters of Ovoko whom God has blessed in different ways to rise up to the challenge and invest in the things of God and you will be enriched from his inexhaustible resources.

OUR GUEST PREACHER:

I welcome in a special way our guest preacher and his amiable wife the Rt. Rev. George Latunji Lasebikan and wife Esther who have been here with us since Saturday. Bishop George attended the Ibadan Grammar School, after which he studied at University of Ibadan where he graduated with B.A. (Hons. and Dip in Religious Studies. His Post-graduate Studies earned him M.Ed. and M.A. in Religious Studies. He finally had his Ph.D.

George Worked in different places before becoming a bishop. He was a Chaplain at the Chapel of Resurrection University of Ibadan 1986 – 1990. He was in charge of All Souls' Parish Church Bodija (Mapo) 1991 – 95. It was when he was there at Bodija Ibadan that I met him for the first time when we went for Bishops' Training at Ibadan in 1995. He was one of those who took very good care of us while in training. He was then under the retired bishop of Ibadan the Rt. Rev. G. Olajide.

I have no doubt that you were challenged by his inspiring and thought – provoking Sermon of yesterday. I believe that we shall all go home with the message of the Sermon to face the challenges ahead and rise up to our responsibility in building up a new community of God's people both spiritually and physically.

My Lord Bishop George and wife Esther we say welcome to you and may God bless you richly in Jesus name, Amen. Ala, Dejee !!!

THE HOST ARCHDEACONRY:

The coming of Anglican Church to Ovoko dates back to 1929 through the help of a Muslim traditional ruler in Ovoko Chief Momo Nwa Oshaba, who was of Nupe origin. For about two years Christians met and worshipped in his compound with Hausa Scholars learning in the Arabic School. The church was then being nursed by Mr. Stephen Uzor, a Church teacher from Umuabi Udi. In 1931 the church was moved from Chief Momo's compound to Obechara, a parcel of land given to the CMS by Ovoko and Obukpa Communities.

Meeting Ugwu Ikpotoakpa of Umuashi Ovoko at this time surrendered his thatched building at Obechara to be used as the church, the school as well as the residential building for the Church teacher mr. Simon Eze from Nachi in Udi Local Government Area.

In 1933 the Church building was blown down by a rain storm. People of Ibeku-Ovoko assisted in erecting a more permanent building to serve as both church and school.

A number of people helped spiritually, morally and financially in the survival of the Church at Obechara, they included traders, artisans and civil servants based in Nsukka. They are Onyedu, Stephen Iloanyasi, Enoch Okpukpua, Augustine Ilo, Nathaniel Eze, Simon Ajabigwe, Enoch Ezechukwu, Hezekia Onyia, Nelson Eze, Godwin Ene, Festus, nweke, Gabriel Chibuzo, etc.

Some of the early converts in Ovoko include Peter Ugwu Onah Ibe an ardent Christian in whose memory St. Peter's Ovoko was named. John Onah from umushiri Ovoko. Others include Lazarus Eze, Jeremiah Aruah, Apollos Agbo, Andrew Nweke, Amos Ugwu and others, Within twenty-eighth year years of St. Peter's existence at Obechara it produced many Christian leaders like late V.N. Ozor Sir G.A. Eze, Sir E.C. Onah; Sir Igwebueze Ugwuoke, Mrs. S.O. Nwokolo, Mrs. Bernice Nnamani and Others.

In 1957 St. Peter's Church, Ovoko was moved from Obechara down to the centre of Ovoko town. This is the present site of Central School Ovoko, formerly St. Peter's School, Ovoko 1929-1971. Those who were instrumental to the acquisition of this site include John Onah, David Onah, Daniel Ugwu, Jonah Ugwu, Apollos Agbo and others. In 1960 Ovoko leaders in an assembly resolved to expand all existing Primary School lands in Ovoko. It was this time that the present School boundary as surveyed was established.

In the year 1994, the church was again moved from Central School Ovoko to its present site. The former sites were left as Schools for the church. In the same year 1994, St. Peter's Church, Ovoko was made the Head of Eketekere group of Churches. On 6th December 1975, the foundation stone of the present St. Peter's Church, Ovoko was laid by the Rt. Rev. G.N. Otubelu B.A., B.D. PAGE, OFR, the Bishop of Enugu. On 6th March 1988 St. Peter's Church, Ovoko became the headquarters of Ovoko Parish inaugurated on the same date.

On 8th December, 1996 Ovoko Archdeaconry was inaugurated with four Parishes-Ovoko, Orba, Uduledem and Eha-Alumona. Today Iheakpu-Awka Parish has become the 5th Parish in the Archdeaconry.

The Ven. Jonathan N. Eze was collated and installed as the first Archdeacon in 1996. He was succeeded by the Ven. Ernest E. Odo followed by the Ven. George U. Nnamani who was collated and installed on the 13th of April 2003. The present Archdeacon Ven. Emmanuel. Onah came in July 2004.

OTHER PARISHES IN THE ARCHDEACONRY

ORBA PARISH

The CMS Mission was established in the year 1930 in this area at Owerre-Eze-Orba and Imilike-Uno by traders from the Southern part of Igbo land.

It came to Okpu Orba in 1933 and in 1935 the mission work was merged into the present St. James' Orba, Orba Parish was inaugurated on May 9th, 1933 with the Rev. G.. Eze as the Vicar in charge. The Parish has three other Churches; St. Luke's Church Imilike-Uno, St. Peter's Church Owerre-Eze-Orba and Christ Church, Agu-Orba.

UDULEDEM PARISH

The Anglican Church in Uduledem was started in 1929 by Mr. Josiah Utah a Sawyer from Edo State. He preached the gospel first at Emelem in Imilike-Agu under the auspices of the C.M.S. This seed of the gospel gave rise to the present St. Peter's Anglican Church Imilike-Agu. The first baptism in this Church was performed by the Rev. E.I. Asioku on 10th February 1934.

OTHER CHURCHES IN THIS AREA INCLUDE:

St. Mary's Anglican Church, Obollo-Eke 1931; St. Paul's Church, Ezimo 1951; All Saints' Church, Obollo-Afor 1962; Emmanuel Church, Obolo-Etiti 1975. St. James' Church Umukpa Ezimo 1989; Holy Trinity Church, Ogbodu-Aba 1993; Emmanuel Church Ezimo-Uno 1994.

All Saints' Church Obollo-Afor being a commercial centre was chosen as the headquarters of the Parish. The Church has grown and their new church building is about to be completed.

EHA-ALUMONA PARISH:

This area was evangelized in 1935 by planting a church at Umu-Arima village through the evangelistic effort of Mr. Ofor. In 1943 the church was moved to the present site at St. Barnabas Eha-Ndiagu. In 1984 it was made the headquarters of Eha-Ndiagu group of Churches and eventually became the Parish Headquarters when the Parish was inaugurated in 1993.

OTHER CHURCHES IN THE PARISH INCLUDE

St. Stephen's Church, Eha-Alumona 1935; St. Paul's Church Amechienu 1935; St. Peter's Church, Umabor-Agu 1935; Christ Church, Eha-Azuabor 1935; St. John's Church, Akwari 1935; Holy Trinity Church, Amanato 1957.

IHEAKPU-AWKA PARISH:

St. Mary's Church Iheakpu-Awka was established in 1933 by a few converts who accepted the faith at St. Andrew's Church, Ibagwa-Aka between 1931 and 1932. It came out of Ibagwa group of Churches to join St. Peter's Church, Ovoko to form the Eketekelu group of Churches when it was constituted into Ovoko Parish in 1988. The Church building which was started in 1982 has progressed significantly within the last few years and it is hoped that very soon it will be dedicated. Iheakpu-Awka parish was inaugurated on 5th December 2004.

EVENTS AFTER THE LAST SYNOD:

NEW PARISHES

Iheakpu-Awka Parish carved out from Ovoko Parish was inaugurated on Sunday 5th December 2004.

Agu-Amede Parish from Eha-Amufu was inaugurated on Sunday 10th July 2005.

FOUNDATION STONE LAYING

The Foundation Stone of the Following Churches were laid.

Emmanuel Church, Ezimo-Uno 19th December 2004, Christ Church, Eziani 17th April 2005; St. Philip's Church, Ozalla 24th July 2005.

We thank God for the progress of work in these Churches and pray that very soon the Churches will be ready for dedication.

I want once more to emphasize the need of not embarking on a building project that does not have Diocesan approval to avoid wasting our meager resources on projects that may be destroyed.

Our Diocesan Engineers and Architects must be consulted for expert and professional advice in all that we do so that our work will stand the test of time.

INSTITUTIONS AND INDUCTIONS:

At the beginning of this year many Pastors were moved to new stations as Vicars in charge of Parishes and the following Priests were charged with the responsibility of being Vicars in their Parishes.

Emmanuel Church, Alor-Uno – The Rev. Canon J.C. Urama – 13th February 2005.

St. Mary's Church, Iheakpu-Awka – The Rev. Alloy Agbo – 27th February 2005.

St. Mary's Church, Opi – The Rev. J.Agbo – 3rd April 2005.

St. John's Church, Itchi – The Rev. S. Eze – 10th April 2005.

St. John's Church, Edemani – The Rev. L.N. Ugwu 22nd May 2005.

On 24th April 2005 – The Ven. E.I Asogwa was collated and installed as the new Archdeacon of Eha-Amufie at. St. Mathew's Church, Mgbuji.

FLAG BASE AT BISHOPSCOURT:

I commend the efforts of the Boys' and Girls' Brigade of the Diocese who constructed a flag base at the Bishopscourt premises. This project was commissioned on 29th April 2005.

TRINITY ORDINATION

On Sunday, 3rd July 2005, 9 persons were ordained, 3 priests and 6 deacons.

The Priests are:

The Rev. Nnamdi Ugo Ezema

The Rev. Daniel Odezue

The Rev. William S. Okoye

The following were made deacons:

The Rev. Cyprian Ezugwu

The Rev. Samson Eneh

The Rev. Chukwudi Okanya

The Rev. Lucius Makua Nnamonu and
The Rev. Emmanuel Onor, serving in the Nigeria Army.

They have since been posted to their stations and it is our prayer that God's special anointing will be on them to make true ambassadors of Christ.

EVANGELISM:

We have continued to be obedient to the 'Great Commission' which is the primary assignment of the Church, to 'go and make disciples of all the nation,' We thank the Diocesan Evangelism Committee for organizing missionary out-reaches to different places. We have carried out mission to Idah and other areas and the Bishop of Idah has shown a great appreciation for the work done. Idah is one of the new missionary Dioceses that have been created and we have been told to assist it.

Already a church has been planted at Ette and we thank God for the enthusiasm of the members. They came to Ogrute last year during their Confirmation Service. Churches have been planted at Nru and Ede-Oballa in the Cathedral Deanery, and these two churches were represented at the last Annual Women Conference.

In Enugu-Ezike Parish of Amufie Archdeaconry a church has been planted at Umuogbo-Ulo.

In Ovoko Archdeaconry new churches have been planted at Ugugu, Amalo, and Agbata, Plans are ahead for planting more churches in Uduledem Parish.

Okpuje Parish in Nsukka Archdeaconry has planted a new church at Umu-Eze-Agu near Okutu.

Other reports from Archdeaconries will be from the Archdeacons themselves.

Some of our churches have received anonymous donation of ₦20,000.00 each – They are Ukpata, Agu-Udele Neke, Agbani, St. Luke's Church, Iheaka.

CREATION OF NEW ARCHDEACONRIES:

In order to carry out more grass – root evangelism it has become necessary that two more Archdeaconries will be carved out from the present Nsukka Archdeaconry.

They are Nsukka East Archdeaconry with Headquarters at Opi to be made up of Opi Parish, Ozalla Parish, Ohodo Parish and Ekwegbe Parish.

Nsukka South Archdeaconry with Headquarters at Aku comprising-Aku Parish, Umulokpa Parish, Adani Parish and Abbi Parish.

Isi-Uzo Archdeaconry with headquarters at Neke, comprising – Ikem Parish, Neke Parish and Mbu Parish.

Dates will soon be given for the inauguration of these Archdeaconries. It is my plea that all of us will join at the inauguration and help these new Archdeaconries to take off.

C.F.F – CHRISTIAN FATHER'S FELLOWSHIP:

The response of our men to join in this fellowship is not yet encouraging. While some Parishes take it seriously others do not. Christian Fathers should recognize the role they are supposed to play in the family and the society and sit up if they are to do that. Many fathers fall far short of commitment in the things of God and therefore cannot give the needed spiritual and material leadership, starting from their homes.

The C.F.F is a forum for Fathers to meet and organize themselves as a force to be reckoned with in the church. When you meet for Bible Studies and Prayer your faith will be deepened and you can then carry out your responsibility as a true Christian Father. This year a Conference was organized for the fathers and I thank all those that attended the Conference.

TAP (TRAIN A PRIEST)

The need for well – trained clergymen cannot be over – emphasized as the quality of our churches depend on the quality of our priests. The cost of maintaining one student in the Theological College has risen considerably. We shall be spending about One Million Naira this year alone to keep our students at Trinity.

We continue to appeal that people will volunteer to pay for at least one student each semester. The cost is about ₦50,000.00 (Fifty Thousand Naira) per Student. The Girls’ Guild of the Diocese has continued to support this project for some years now.

This year someone who chose to remain anonymous volunteered to offer scholarship to one of our students at Trinity. We thank these people and appeal that others will take up the challenge.

DONATIONS

We have received donations from some organizations and individuals.

- (i) ₦500,000.00 = (Five Hundred Thousand Naira) only
- (ii) ₦700,000.00 = (Seven Hundred Thousand Naira) only.

The Governor of Abia State Dr. Orji Uzo Kalu through Sir Dr. Emeka Enejere gave us ₦200,000.00 (Two Hundred Thousand Naira) only. It is our prayer that God will continue to bless them.

THE IGBO LANGUAGE: A RELEGATION SYNDROME:

According to UNESCO prediction, the Igbo Language faces the danger of extinction in the next fifteen years. This should be a matter of concern to anyone who calls himself or herself an Igbo person.

According to Dr. Aggrey “Whoever is not proud of his colour is not fit to live.” Language, apart from indicating the culture of a people is also the pride of any people. All over the world people are proud of their language and will do all within their power to preserve their language.

In Nigeria, however, it is only the Igbos that play down on their language. In some schools people are ridiculed when they speak the Igbo Language.

In most of our rural congregations today our pastors address members in English without caring whether they understand what is being said or not.

Article 24 of the Thirty-Nine Articles States:

“It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the Primitive Church, to have public prayer in the Church, or minister the sacraments in a tongue not understood of the people.

The Province of Niger during one of our provincial Councils decided that we hold our meetings in our mother tongue. Let us therefore as a people rise up to this challenge and be proud of our Igboness, protect our language and culture, promote Igbo values of truth and hard-work and nature a very strong bond of unity and brotherhood.

BURIAL OF MY FATHER-IN-LAW PA BENSON O. OFOENZIE:

My wife and I lack words to express our immense gratitude to the entire people of this Diocese for your unparalleled support and encouragement throughout the period of mourning and burial. Individuals, Archdeacons, Parishes, Churches and Organizations through visits and gifts surprised us. We thank God for all of you and pray that God will bless you abundantly and that others will equally visit you with such love and kindness. Please convey our sincere thanks to your people when you go back.

OBITUARY:

- Within the period in review we lost the following members of our Diocese.
- Sir Albert Eze of Alor-Uno
- Mrs. Ugwu – Wife of Late Rev. Amos Ugwu
- Mrs. Felicia Eze – Wife of the Rev. L.N. Eze
- Mr. Chukwudi Ogbogu – Local Helper – Obimo
- Sir Samson O. Enyi.

Other deaths will be reported in the Archdeaconry reports. It is our prayer that God will console the above families in Jesus name.

CHURCH OF NIGERIA NEWS:

New Liturgy In Igbo:-

The translation of the entire Church of Nigeria Prayer Book into Igbo has been completed and a trial copy has been sent to all the Dioceses of the East that worship in Igbo language. We thank the Bishop of Oji-River Diocese, the Rt. Rev. Dr. A.A. Madu and his team who did the work.

NEW DIOCESES:

A total of 12 new Dioceses have been created out of which 10 are Missionary Diocese. This brings the total number of Diocese to 94. We thank God for this astronomical growth in the Church of Nigeria.

The Missionary Diocese are:-

Kubwa from	-	Abuja Diocese
Idah from	-	Diocese of Lokoja
Arochukwu from	-	Diocese of Umuahia
Isiukwuator/Umunochi	-	Diocese of Umuahia
Ikwuano	-	Diocese of Umuahia

Ogoni	-	Diocese of Niger Delta North
Badagry	-	Diocese of Lagos West
Ogbomosho	-	Diocese of Ibadan
Zonkwa	-	Diocese of Kafanchan
Western Izon	-	Diocese of Warri.

The other two Dioceses are:-

Aguata carved out of Awka Diocese and Ijebu North carved out of Ijebu Diocese.

Bishops have been elected and consecrated for these Dioceses as follows:-

The Rt. Rev. Benjamin E. Emamezi	-	Western Izon
The Rt. Rev. Mathew Osunade	-	Ogbomosho
The Rt. Rev. Joseph A. Adeyeni	-	Badagry
The Rt. Rev. Duke T. Akamisoko	-	Zonkwa
The Rt. Rev. Samuel C. Chukwuka	-	Isiukwuator
The Rt. Rev. Solomon S. Gberegbara	-	Ogoni
The Rt. Rev. Johnson C. Onuoha	-	Arochukwu/Ohafia
The Rt. Rev. Chigozirim Onyegbule	-	Ikwuano

TRANSLATION:

The following Bishops were translated

The Rt. Rev. Emmanuel Egbunu	-	Suffragan Bishop of Abuja translated to Lokoja
The Rt. Rev. Simon Bala	-	Kubwa
The Rt. Rev. Danile Yisa	-	Minna
The Rt. Rev. Christian Efobi	-	Aguata

During the last General Synod at Onitsha three Bishops were elected

Diocese of Yola	-	Ven. Ibrahim Malchus
Diocese of Damaturu	-	Ven. Abiodun
Congo	-	Ven. Abiodun Olaoye

We thank God for these new Bishops and pray that He will continue to uphold them in their ministry as they shepherd the flock of Christ.

CHURCH OF NIGERIA ASSESSMENT:

This year the Church of Nigeria Assessment has been drastically reduced. This is because of the Endowment Fund which Dioceses have been asked to pay so that Dioceses will then have fund for their own internal development.

Unfortunately we have not finished our own quota but we have benefitted from it. It is my appeal that we shall not relent but do all within our power to complete the balance.

OBITUARY:

The Most Rev. Benjamin Nwankiti – Retired Archbishop of Province II, Dean Church of Nigeria.

The Most Rev. Albert Agbaje – Archbishop of Bendel and Bishop of Sabongidda-Ora
Mrs. Theresa Kwasi – Wife of the Bishop of Katsina

Mrs. Ogboyomi – Wife of the retired Bishop of Kaduna.

We thank God for the life of these his servants and pray that He will grant them eternal rest.

We pray that God in His infinite mercy will continue to sustain their families.

NATIONAL ISSUES:

We thank God that inspite of all odds democratic government has continued to survive. We are grateful for the achievements that have been made under this democratic setting, which has improved the living condition of some people in our society. However, majority of Nigerians still live below the poverty level because of the worsening economic conditions of our time occasioned by arbitrary and constant increase of fuel price. While we thank the government, our plea is that such a reform must be done at a pace that will not bring untold and unbearable hardship on the masses.

We appreciate the effort of the Federal Government in fighting corruption. The crusade has had a positive effect and I believe that this will gladden the heart of the outside world and make them have a rethink about its assessment of our country in international circles. We however call on the Federal Government to make sure that they look inward in order to convince the public of the seriousness of the exercise.

Our politics is still characterized by bitterness and political killings and assassinations still abound. Man must learn not to be wolf to his fellow man. Politicians must learn to fear \God and see themselves as servants and not masters.

It is heart – warming that the present government is putting in place machinery to have a census for the country, whereby an accurate and a credible data for the nation will be obtained. This will make for a sustainable and effective development of the country. If our census will meet international standards it becomes imperative that we adopt all the processes that will make for a credible census. The government must make sure that religions and ethnicity are not dropped as is being rumoured in some quarters.

The Federal Government has to revisit the idea of the immunity clause in our constitution under which many of our leaders hide to dupe and loot the nation's treasury. This obnoxious clause ought to be removed from our constitution. Immunity can only be meaningful when it relates to frivolous allegations or mischievous petitions that sabotage good governance, peace and justice.

Our attention must equally be drawn to the deplorable condition of most of our federal roads. Although attempts are made to repair some of our roads, most of the roads today in our country are death traps and both lives and property that are wasted on these roads cannot be quantified. The Federal government should set up a monitoring team to access the work done and make sure that money meant for road work is not siphoned for the 2007 political campaign.

Mention must be made of the security of life and property. We thank the Inspector General of Police Mr. Sunday Ehindero for his zeal in trying to curb the excesses of the Police who engage in extortion of money and unnecessary harassment of the citizenry.

We however must draw his attention to the rampant killings of innocent civilians by the Police at check – points and other killings in the guise of armed robbery suspects. Those who are supposed to protect and preserve the lives and property of the nation should not be seen as heartless killers and destroyers.

We also appeal that State governments must look at our rural roads, most of which seem to have been abandoned and a journey of half an hour takes about two hours or more.

It is our prayer that the wrangling within the polity will be peacefully resolved in order to save this nation from any further crisis.

MEETING OF THE THREE ECCLESIASTICAL PROVINCES OF THE EAST (FORMER PROVINCE II)

Our Diocese will be hosting this meeting in February 2006, the meeting will start with the Episcopal Synod on Wednesday 8th February 2006 and other members will join on Thursday 9th February for the Provincial Council. With the creation of some Missionary Dioceses in the East and the new Aguata Diocese we now have about 30 Bishops.

We thank the Council of Knights for already putting some plans in place towards the hosting of this meeting. I will like people to indicate their willingness to host one or two Bishops by offering to pay their hostel bills. God will bless you as you do this.

THE CATHEDRAL PROJECT:

The Cathedral Building Committee under the Chairmanship of Sir Dr. Emeka Enejere has had several meetings and useful deliberations on how to get on with the project.

One of their proposals is to organize a Diocesan Launching for the Project in April 2006. It has been agreed in the Diocesan Board held on 29th September 2005 that every male adult of the Diocese will pay ₦1,000.00 (One Thousand Naira) only. Females ₦500.00 and Children ₦100.00 only. This will be on Church, Parish and Archdeaconry levels. Then on the day of the Diocesan Launching when outsiders and friends will be invited these proceeds will be brought from the different Archdeaconries. Do not be left out in this forward movement.

THE THEME OF THE SYNOD:

“Let us arise and build” (Nehemiah 2:17 – 18)

In the book of Nehemiah we peep at the personal memoirs of a great leader and an activist, a patriot who left an enduring legacy of great leadership.

Nehemiah was the son of Hacaliah and was among those taken captive when Persia under the King Artaxerxes captured Judah. Nehemiah’s character must have been responsible for making him rise to be the King’s cup – bearer in foreign land.

(Nehemiah 1:11). This was a privileged position and he was comfortable and would have not bothered about anything. Nehemiah however had a soft spot for his homeland Judah and was concerned about the state of Jerusalem. He believed in the saying that “East or West home is

the best.” He was always asking about the condition of his father land. “I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that survived the exile and also about Jerusalem.” (Nehemiah 1:2)

The reply he got removed every happiness from his face. “Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire” (Nehemiah 1:3).

Nehemiah’s feeling could not be hidden and this was shown in his countenance and the King detected it. “Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart.” (Nehemiah 2:2)

The Jews had been back home from exile for almost a hundred years but had made no attempt to build Jerusalem that was in ruin beyond the restoration of the Temple because their enemies made it impossible. Nehemiah’s concern and burden for the plight of God’s people in the promised – land was clear. Having been fully briefed about the bad situation in Jerusalem, he intensely desired to organize the people into rebuilding the city wall. His heart went out to the people who were being exploited through the charging of excessive interests. He even refused food and salary because of the burden he was placing on the people. He consulted God Who made him found favour with the King. The King in turn, granted him leave of absence in addition to giving him a letter of authority and material resources he needed for the execution of the project. (Nehemiah 2:7-9).

When Nehemiah arrived Jerusalem, he applied wisdom and a high sense of responsibility. He was not in hurry to begin work without proper preparation, planning and thorough investigation. His vision and mission was temporally kept to himself. Soon after he had completed his investigation and convinced himself that the stage is set for action, he assembled and mobilized the people. When he sold or shared his vision, mission and mandate to his people, it was easy for him to receive positive response and acceptance. The people in unison said **“LET US ARISE AND BUILD”** (Nehemiah 2:17 – 18).

LEADERSHIP QUALITIES OF NEHEMIAH:

Nehemiah succeeded because he was not only an idealist but also a realist. He combined effectively prayer with work and will not take anything for granted. His inclinations and traits were in conformity with St. James’ understanding of faith and works. (James 2:14, 20 – 26). He understood clearly the theories of management, division of labour and conflict. These, he fully utilized. Although, the mandate and vision were his own he did not raise his head very high or blow his trumpet. Rather, he showed a lot of humility, respect and understanding with the people he met. It was not in his character to condemn, judge or speak harshly to the people he met in Jerusalem. Instead, he carried everybody along and was a full participant in his vision and set goal. Nehemiah was a man of courage and perseverance, fearless and unmoved by opposition/criticism within and without. He knew the sacredness and seriousness of the assignment God impressed upon him and will not allow anything to distract him. He was dedicated, thorough and determined to succeed. He followed every step and stage with prayer. All these fortified his faith and confidence in God Who strengthened him to succeed to the admiration and delight of his well wishers and even his so – called enemies. In short, Nehemiah’s leadership qualities can be summed up in the following words – an agonizer, organizer, inspirer, prayer – warrior, energetic, revolutionist, reformer, intercessor and mobilizer. If we must move forward in our Diocese, Archdeaconries, Parishes Churches and

even in our families, we need to possess these leadership qualities. They are essential ingredients and equipment to call and mobilize people for action.

RELEVANCE OF THE CALL:

As we watch helplessly and hopelessly events in our families, Churches and society in general, we can assert categorically and equivocally without contradiction that the call “**LET US ARISE AND BUILD**” is as relevant and urgent today as it was when Nehemiah made the call.

When we look around we will discover that all social, religious, political, family and educational institutions have broken down. Sin has become a tradition. All human systems are in jeopardy and great mess. Consequently, these evils have adversely affected our life style. Society today is looking for Nehemiah and people that can stand in the gap. (Ezekiel 23:30). Men and women that are concerned, burdened, fearless, courageous and determined. Leaders who can mobilize and move others to action. Reformists/revolutionists that are visionaries and have capacities to change the system for better. The human institutions need complete overhaul and rebuilding to bring it back to its former glory. God in Isaiah 62:1 said “for Zion’s sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem’s sake, I will not rest, until her vindication goes forth as brightness...” The concern to **arise and build** is, therefore, appropriate and timely. Apart from the spiritual aspects that we are called to **arise and build**, the physical and infrastructural facilities in our Diocese call for concern and action if we will ever meet the demands of the present generation.

We thank God that through these formative years our Diocese through prudent management and support of members has improved the infrastructural facilities as well as changed the giving attitude of members positively within eleven years of its existence; members are now beginning to realize that the Diocese belongs to all of us and together we shall develop it and make it what it should be. However, much still remain to be done if we must meet the demands of the present generation. Hence, the call “Let us arise and build” is very much relevant as a way of creating awareness and maintaining the present tempo of development, which the Diocese is witnessing.

WHAT ARE WE CALLED UPON TO BUILD?

We shall arise and build; our faith in God, prayer life, hunger and thirst for the Word of God; love for one another, attitude to giving, our life – style, fear of God and respect for authorities, etc. Family (home), education, social, political, economy and religious institutions have all broken down and require attention. We must be burdened and concerned about these broken walls of our nation. There are spiritual and moral decay and ruin everywhere. These societal maladies have adversely affected the foundation of the Church. Holiness which is the nature and standard of God has been relegated to the background. There is need for reawakening of our conciseness, awareness, orientation and complete overhaul of our mental faculties (Lev. 20:7; Rom, 12:1; 1Cor. 3:17; 7:34 Eph. 4:1-24; Heb. 12:14). The church must arise and fight materialism, worldliness, loss of our heritage and doctrine, corruption, nepotism, greed, selfishness, idolatry, crime and all manner of evils that are gradually taking the place of God in our lives. We must restore, arise and build love, communal life (Acts 2:42 – 47; 4:32-37). Faithfulness, zeal to serve, witnessing and mission commitment/dedication, giving for the work of God, sacrifice of time and resources, teaching of sound doctrine and word of God, obedience, humility, etc. These are what the Church is known for but secularism has taken over. We must arise and build, and reconstruct these broken walls in order to restore the hope, dignity and glory of God as well as our integrity.

ART OF BUILDING AND PATTERN:

The art of building entails patience, determination, diligence, persistence, encouragement, hope, foresight and joy. These things are what the builder must acquire. In the course of embarking on any project, provocation is common. What matters is the ability of the builder to organize these unseen materials. There is need to build according to God's pattern (Genesis 6:15 – 16, 22; Phil. 3:16 – 21). We must avoid building on a faulty foundation (Eph. 2:19 – 22; Luke 6:48 – 49; 2Tim. 2:19; 1Cor. 9:23 – 27).

VISION FOR BUILDING:

The word 'vision' literally means a vivid concept or picture. It portrays what is in sight or what we anticipate in the future. Vision is very important and the Bible declares that "where there is not vision, the people perish" (Prov. 29:18). Nehemiah succeeded because he had a vision but Samballat and Tobiah were total strangers and foreigners to the commonwealth of Israel. They were pagans and uncircumcised and were attacking and opposing the people and work of God, but these anti-God attitude did not perturb the vision of Nehemiah who had a goal and could not be distracted. Today, we have many of such in the Diocese among the laity and unfortunately, among the ordained. These people are spiritually unregenerate strangers to the Diocese. They serve only their interests and motives. They look religious but are far away from God, by their fruits we shall identify them (1Tim. 3:5, Matt. 7:20). These Samballats and Tobiahs in the Church practice religion but have no touch with the reality. They are interested in occupying positions, names and authorities. Some of them are like Samson and King Saul who thought they were with God not knowing that God's favour had left and finished with them. We are called to **Arise, build and restore**.

THE ROLE OF THE ENEMIES:

We shall be mindful and careful of enemies within and without – sycophants, hypocrites, pretenders and saboteurs. We shall bear in mind that there is no meaningful project we shall embark upon without opposition and destructive criticism bordering more or less on egocentrism and selfishness. The most painful enemy is the one St. Paul described as false brethren and enemy within (1Cor. 11:26). We shall be very careful and watchful of such people. We have many of them already in our minds. These enemies of progress will leave nothing undone to see that all our genuine efforts as much as possible are frustrated and destroyed. They are wolves in sheep clothing (Matt. 7:15 – 16; Matt. 10:16 – 17). They have a form of godliness but deny the power of God. Like Nehemiah, we have nothing to do with them (2Tim. 3:5 – 9). Swiftly and urgently, we must address every opposition that will come under any disguise to manoeuvre, sabotage, discourage and distract us from our set goals. While we ignore enemies of progress, we must not under-estimate what they can do. We shall be watchful. In our midst are many Sambalats and Tobiahs. They must be identified and treated appropriately and accordingly.

NEHEMIAH'S STRATEGY:

There is a lot to learn about the strategy Nehemiah used in rebuilding Jerusalem. We can still use some of these strategies in our Diocese.

2. PRAYER AND RELIANCE ON GOD:

The prayer life of Nehemiah is a strategy worthy of our emulation and application. Nehemiah turned to God in prayer at all times and under all circumstances. His ministry on behalf of the Jews was a combination of prayer and work. We cannot fail to notice "arrow prayer" that dotted his entire work. Some of these prayers are spontaneous and expressed

his inner feelings before God, it is to be noted that prayer of Nehemiah must be followed by action. Prayer is a by-product of burden as well as faith in God. (Phil. 4:6 – 7; 2Thes. 5:17; 1Samuel 1:15; Matt. 7:7). It is through prayer that Nehemiah got the approval and favour of the King, the acceptance of his vision by the people, overcome opposition and completed the project in record time (52 days). Consulting God through prayers in all our endeavours is a sure way of achieving success in our Diocese. The more we pray, the more we have answer and solution to our problems. There is no way we can arise and build unless we put our faith and confidence in God. (Psalm 27:1, Zac. 4:6). Faith will make us to see God rather than the problem. (Heb. 11:1). These can only be real if we are prayerful. Like Nehemiah, a prayerful Christian is a powerful Christian. Do you pray for bad situations around you and in this Diocese?

3. SHARING AND CO-OPERATION:

One mistake often made by people is concealing their visions and mission to themselves. For a vision to be worthwhile, and successful, it must be shared with all stakeholders. After all, nobody or group in a church, for instance, is an Island. We depend on each other, and through that way, we complement our efforts in achieving a common goal. Team work is very essential. Nehemiah utilized it to the full and achieved tremendous and unparalleled success in a record time. He was the person who had the mandate and vision to rebuild Jerusalem. But he realized or appreciated the fact that the assignment cannot be executed alone.

He needed people on ground. Hence, he mobilized the people, shared his vision with them and went further to be a participant in the execution of the project. He never blew his trumpet but humbled himself, and carried all classes of people along. He knew the worth of team work to achieve a goal and this made his task easy. Like Nehemiah, St. Paul understood the effectiveness or impact of sharing and co-operation in any human endeavour when he spoke vividly, logically and practically in his letters to the Romans and Corinthians about the diverse gifts and their operations for the building and growth of the Church. (Romans 12:3-8; 1Corinthians 12:1-31).

Building of anything is never done by one individual it is done collectively. Any part or person that is ignored will lead to a devastating and serious consequence to the entire body or project. Be it in a housing project, football field, family undertakings, organization, etc, - name them, we need team work, co-operation and unity of mind and purpose. Take a house project as an example. At every stage, various artisans and professionals with expert skills are required. Ignore any of them, the building will be stalled. As we can see in the book of Proverbs, Chapter 6:6 – 9; ants are typical and classical example of team – work and unity in diversity. Igbo adage will tell us that “**Igwe-bu-Ike, ‘Ibu-anyi-Danda**”. The French use “**esprit de corps**” to emphasize the importance of unity for any given tasks. Any family, organization or corporate body like a church that ignores the importance of co-operation and sharing will sooner or later find itself in deep waters. If our Diocese will diligently apply the concept of co-operation and sharing in all its visions, we shall make tremendous progress.

4. SPECIAL ATTRIBUTES

Other attributes of Nehemiah that will make us to see the need to arise and build are courage, preparation/planning before embarking on anything, sacrifice, able to inspire/motivate people, absolute faith/confidence in God, ability to mobilize and manage people, and of-course, being alert and watchful to be able to discern the movement of the enemies. Nehemiah exhibited all these qualities and they enabled him to succeed in his set goals. For the Diocese to move

forward and make tangible progress, we shall carefully apply these strategies. In doing so, we shall not only get things done and quickly too but we shall confound the skeptics, pessimist, fault-finders and, in short, enemies of progress within and without our Diocese.

BUILDING THE CHURCH:

The purpose of God is that the Church will be in the world but not of the world. The Church is the light and salt of the earth. We are not to conform to the ways of the world system. (Matt. 5:13-16; 1John 2:15-17; Romans 12:1-2). We are the body of Christ and the body has many parts whose roles and functions are complimentary. No part of the body exists in isolation. Rivalry, party spirit, jealousy, hypocrisy and destructive criticism, etc, exist when we have lost sight of the picture of what the body of Christ is. We are called by the same God, saved by the same Lord Jesus and sanctified by the same Holy Spirit. If then it is one Lord, one faith, one spirit, one hope and one God the Father of all, the love of God will bind us together in fellowship, mission and vision.

These were the understanding that made Nehemiah to arise to the call to build. They had the mind to work because of the vision shared and accepted (Nehemiah 4:6). It is the Lord that builds. We must bear this in mind as we share our vision with others, the initiative to build (psalm 127:1).

CHALLENGES:

We are faced with the challenges to arise and build our broken walls and restore our lost image. Rebuilding is very expensive and sacrificial as it involves pulling down, destroying and repairing. You recall the picture of the potter and the pot. (Jeremiah 18:4). We have the mandate to up root and pull down and to build (Jeremiah 1;10). Building in the context we have been discussing does not necessarily end in infrasctural development. It also involves spiritual and moral development. To do this, we must have the mindset that would allow certain things to be uprooted, destroyed and overthrown in our lives. This may appear offensive, painful and wasteful. But this is how to build and to plant. Nevertheless, a definite pattern is to be followed to make our adventure worthwhile. We must adopt the strategy of Nehemiah and King David and eschew the strategy of Samballat and Tobia. The call to **arise and build** is both imperative and urgent. Nehemiah had a similar situation in his time as we are facing today. He faced the situation squarely, we are challenged to do same. There were compelling reasons why Nehemiah embarked on the project of rebuilding Jerusalem. Firstly, for protection and keeping the outsiders out from the enemies' attack. Secondly, for separation. Movements in and out checked. Separation will also reduce growing worldliness of the Jews who had been associating freely with the surrounding pagan people. As a Church, we should have defined boundaries to check the enemies sudden attack, which comes in various ways including false teaching/doctrine and sheep stealing. We must have reason for building or rebuilding. To do this, we must be united. There must be a team work to achieve a success. In a football field, one person cannot score a goal without the efforts of others. Our work in the Diocese and individual Churches will be easy if these facts are recognized. We must have faith in God and in ourselves that we can accomplish anything we set for ourselves to build. The level of our closeness to God will determine our success. We get to God through prayer. Our prayer – life must be transformed. Prayer, therefore, is an important and vital tool of our spiritual warfare that requires rebuilding. Through prayer we seek and know the mind of God concerning any issue or project we want to embark upon. Another challenge is the study of the Word of God, we cannot make headway without true knowledge of God, this can only be done through the in depth study of the Word of God (1Tim. 2:15; Matt. 22:29; Mark 12:24). There is no workshop or gathering in this Diocese that we do not emphasize the need

for Bible Study as a sure way of individual and Church growth. Whether we take the advice is another thing. But it is a challenge we must not ignore.

Another important area of challenge is witnessing and preparing souls for the Kingdom of God. (1Cor. 9:15-19). We are commissioned to spread the good news of Jesus Christ throughout the world. This involves both the verbal proclamation of the gospel truth and the demonstration of gospel reality in the lives of believers.

It is evangelism that keeps the Church going and growing. (Matt. 28:16). We are called to **arise and build** by remaining resolute, steadfast and focused. We shall be well armed to face the direct confrontation, conspiracy and subversion of our enemies whose sole motive is to discourage, intimidate, weaken our unity and commitment to the task ahead of us. There are people in our Churches who are openly and secretly working against our lofty proposals. These people are carnally minded. Wolves in sheep's garments. (Romans 8:6-7; Matt. 7:15). We shall equip ourselves with the spiritual warfare bearing in mind that our battle is not carnal only but spiritual. (Eph. 6:10-21; 2Cor. 10:4-6). We must contend for the faith and all that fight against our faith (Jude 1). The need for proper gadgets of warfare and fortification is because the enemy is not resting. (1Peter 5:8). Part of the challenge in this call to **arise and build** is to create awareness, instill confidence in the people that something could be done, make the people feel important, carry along everybody and be able to mobilize and motivate the people. We shall also be actively involved in any work we are embarking upon. Being part of any project enables us to share and discuss our mandate, vision and mission with others freely without suspicion of person and selfish agenda.

As leaders faced with challenges of leaders, we must learn and apply management skills, which is the ability to get things done through other people. Our position in any office must be a way not obstacle. We will endeavour to use our positions in serving others and not to brag or boast. The need for thorough research, caution and good judgement in doing God's work are essential ingredients. To accept the challenge, "**arise and build**", there must be unity and understanding among all (Amos 3:3). The burden and concern we have for any given situation must be seen and shared by others. This is a way of overcoming and confounding enemies of progress. In doing this, we must recognize individual/group gifts and talents and use them as appropriate and necessary. The conditions of our Priests and other Church workers without parsonages, basic amenities, mobilities and good welfare scheme should bother us. Without parsonages, basic amenities, mobility and good welfare scheme, our productivity will fall below expectation.

ARISE AND BUILD VIS A VIS NSUKKA DIOCESE:

We thank God that within these years through his grace we can say proudly that some remarkable progress has been made. In spite of the peculiarity of our environment and attitude of some of our leaders lay and ordained; the Diocese was able to record tremendous successes in areas of infrastructural development, visible change in giving attitude of members, some level of commitment, introduction of all kinds of programmes and projects aimed at raising the spiritual, moral and material needs of the Church and members. All these and a lot more, notwithstanding, it is not yet "Uhuru," The Diocese still has a long way to go. We shall **arise and build** in the areas of:

- A befitting Cathedral,
- Diocesan Hospital and Maternity,
- Skill and Vocational Centres,
- Primary and Secondary Schools,

- Official Vehicle for Church Workers,
- Introduction of endowment fund,
- Well equipped bookshop/Printing Press/Library,
- Conference Centre/Guest Houses,
- Planting of more Churches,
- Fuel depot,
- Sinking of Boreholes, etc.

Most of these ventures will not only serve as comfort for Diocesan programmes but money yielding that will in future reduce considerably requests for monetary contributions by members. If the Diocese must play its role as appropriate, all these areas being mentioned must be addressed. Within this period of our existence enough awareness has been created. We have men and women and even resources like money to embark on any project. What is required is willingness and determination. The era of passivity must give way to commitment and dedication. Time is gone when we do not show interest in any project located outside our own immediate vicinity or what is happening in the Diocesan or Archdeaconry Headquarters.

Our abroad members wherever they are and those of us residing at home in this Diocese must be concerned and burdened with these needs and, should **arise and build** for posterity. We must realize that Nsukka is our own Jerusalem and the Diocese belongs to all of us. Schism must give way to harmony at all level. The emphasis should be on what unites, not on what divides. We must all **arise and build** in this Diocese. Women of this Diocese through their ebullient and charismatic leadership are in the fore-front of development and to a large extent have created sufficient awareness among themselves of the needs and problems of our Diocese. They had also mobilized themselves to **arise and build**. Hence, all over the Diocese we are witnessing tangible projects they are doing. Likewise, men should show greater zeal and stop leaving the work for few interested men and the womenfolk to shoulder the development of the Diocese.

All hands must be on deck. Men should join hands with the women to reduce the stresses and distresses of few individuals and groups presently making all the sacrifices. People who are hiding their relations and would not like them to identify with the Diocese are saboteurs and should be made to understand that they are denying themselves God's blessings and rewards. Vigorously, the Diocese should continue to campaign against outdated traditional beliefs and ceremonies still rampant in our Diocese like mode of burial ceremonies, treatment of widows, idol worship, hawking by children and adult, adultery and sexual intercourse among the unmarried, early girl marriage, etc. Our response to these and other vices is to **arise and build**. We have no option if we must move this our Diocese forward and make it a model and envy of many. Men and women, adults and youths, let us **arise and build!**

To achieve success in the right direction in this Diocese, we must eschew antagonism, strife, vying for position/power, slander and hypocrisy, etc. We shall be above board in these areas. All classes of people and groups must be identified and carried along if we intend to leave and enduring legacy for people that will take over from us.

On a general note, the Diocese must come out and show concern about the youths and moral decadence in areas of mode of dressing, violent crime, corruption, nepotism, local and foreign immoral films, examination malpractices, etc. These are the problems of the society with their attendant multiplication of adverse effects. As a Diocese we must arise and do something. We shall not continue to keep silent as if it does not affect us. What affects our youths affects us because the youths are the future leaders. We shall, therefore, speak out and create awareness

of the future consequences of these evil deeds to the society and the Church as an integral part.

CONCLUSION:

As we run the race and build up our common life, let us look to Jesus Christ, the one Who began our faith (Heb. 12:2). Brethren, let us **arise and build** together with one mind. Let us build in love and peace. Our Lord Jesus Christ has already laid the foundation. Let us rise up for the time is ripe. But there is no way we can **arise and build** if there is no spirit of unity, and understandings among all segments that make up the body of Christ. Jesus Christ had fashioned us into a community of faith, (Eph. 2:1-3; 1Peter 2:9-10). Jesus Christ's ultimate purpose in the gospel is to create new people who live out the message, a Kingdom in which justice replaces injustice, team work replaces individualism and compassion reigns over competition and neglect of others. **The call "Let us Arise and Build"** challenges us to look beyond our own self-interest to the interest of others. (Romans 12:3 – 8; Eph. 4:1-6; Phil. 2:1-11). To accept these challenges is to live no longer for ourselves but for Christ (Gal. 2:20). One thing is having a burden. Another is taking quick action.

Like in the period of Nehemiah, we need an agonizer, inspirer, intercessor, mobilizer who will be in the gap and tell the people that with God all things are possible. (Matt. 19:26).

May God help us to understand the mystery of the call **"let us arise and build."** May God help us to see the helplessness and hopelessness that will make us to be burdened and concerned about our present predicaments and problems. There is reward for every good work we do to uplift our Diocese in particular and the society in general.

(1Cor. 15:58; Gal. 6:9-10). If we must leave enduring legacies in our time, we must arise and build rather than keep quiet which is dangerous. May God give us the people who will be able to face the problems of now and future, people who will put their feet down and say, live or die, survive or perish, they will move; people who will move others to action. We need dedicated, committed, determined, fearless and courageous members, We need a definite encounter with Jesus Christ to be able to have the burden and concern that will move us to **arise and build**. This will only happen if we can sacrifice and make ourselves available for God to use.

Father, create in us the burden and concern to see what is around us so as to respond positively to the call **"Let us Arise and Build"** in the name of the father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen!

Thank you for patient listening.

The Rt. Rev. Dr. J.C. Illonuba,
(*Nsukka*)

During the period in review we had the following Admissions and Confirmations as stated in the table below.

143 candidates were admitted to Girls' Guild.

174 candidates admitted to Women's Guild.

67 Women to Mothers' Union.

85 men to Christian Fathers' Fellowship.

While 1265 candidates were confirmed 417 males and 848 females.

We pray that these children of God will not go back on their commitment and vows.

ADMISSIONS AND CONFIRMATION:

<i>DATE</i>	<i>NAMES OF PARISHES</i>	<i>G.G</i>	<i>W.G.</i>	<i>M.U.</i>	<i>CFF</i>	<i>CONFIRMATION</i>		
						<i>MALES</i>	<i>FEMALES</i>	<i>TOTAL</i>
14-11-2004	St. Luke's Parish, Nsukka	18	6	9	9	27	34	61
6-2-2005	St. James', Orba	7	4	5	8	41	72	113
5-5-2005	St. Stephen's, Neke	7	12	6	4	15	45	60
8-5-2005	St. Stephen's, Ogrute	1	18	7	7	17	107	124
15-5-2005	St. Paul's, Cathedral	6	19	14	4	42	63	105
29-5-2005	St. Andrew's, Ibagwa	26	21	5	11	54	123	177
12-6-2005	St. Luke's, Amufie	9	6	-	5	35	47	82
26-6-2005	Christ Church Chapel, UNN	-	8	3	-	17	27	44
9-7-2005	St. Cyprian's Chapel, Nsukka	10	-	-	-	17	47	64
17-7-2005	St. Matthew's, Ekwegbe	11	9	6	3	16	50	66
31-7-2005	St. Bartholomew's, Obimo	10	11	6	9	27	49	76
7-8-2005	Emmanuel Church, Afo-Uno	17	7	1	6	14	48	62
28-8-2005	St. Andrew's, Ikem	14	20	4	6	20	34	50
18-9-2005	St. Peter's, Ovoko	3	27	1	13	51	68	119
25-9-2005	St. Mark's, Obukpa	4	6	-	-	24	34	58
	Totals	143	174	67	85	417	848	1265

APPENDIX 1
CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) STANDING COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD AT THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL, KADUNA
WEDNESDAY, 9TH –FRIDAY, 11TH MARCH, 2005.

Message to the nation

At the Standing Committee Meeting of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) deliberating under the them, ‘**TO OBEY IS BETTER THAN SACRIFIECE**’ (1Samuel 15:22), the Church through the Standing Committee with the Most Rev. Peter j. Akinola, CON, DD, Primate of All Nigeria presiding, has the following message:

PREAMBLE:

The Church thanks the Kaduna state Governor, Alhaji Ahmed Mohammed Makarfi, Deputy Governor, Engr. Stephen Shekari, and the good people of Kaduna State, for their goodwill hospitality to the Meeting.

COMMENDATION OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT:

The Church observes with delight the good effort of the Kaduna State Government in the following area:

- Commitment to ensuring that all residents in the State are treated in the spirit of equity, justice and fair play as Nigerians, state of origin and/or religious persuasion notwithstanding. The Church hereby encourages all other States to emulate the commendable posture of the Kaduna State Government.

THE NATIONAL POLITICAL REFORM CONFERENCE:

The Church commends the effort of the Federal Government in the following area:

- In listening to the various agitations of the masses for a national forum where to air their views on the future of Nigeria. The National Political Reform Conference is, therefore, a right step that may launch Nigeria into a truly just society. The Church, therefore, calls on Conference Delegates to be painstaking and dispassionate in deliberating on all issues especially those of national importance that will enhance unity, peace and justice in Nigeria.

YEAR 2005 NATIONAL CENSUS:

- The Church notes the effort to date of the Federal Government on plans for the Year 2005 National Census. The Church is, however, concerned that all Census exercises since 1973 appear plagued with disputable figures. Consequently, the results seemed not to have been given due publicity. Therefore, the Federal Government is hereby called upon to come up with clear guidelines and principles that will lead to publishing the results of the Census for effective usage in governance. Furthermore, every effort should be made to capture comprehensive data on every citizen (e.g state of origin, religions, place of normal domicile, date and place of birth, etc).

THE TSUNAMI DISASTER RELIEF PROGRAMME:

- The Church commends the Federal Government on its relief efforts to the Tsunami Disaster victims while calling on all who can, to assist further with relief items (gifts – in kind and cash). In addition, periodic/occasional ecumenical services should be

organized at the national level to raise funds and materials for victims of disasters within and outside Nigeria.

APPENDIX II

CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD AT THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL, KADUNA WEDNESDAY, 9TH –FRIDAY, 11TH MARCH, 2005.

Message to the Nation:

NATIONAL IDENTITY CARD

The Church observes that the identity Cards have not yet been fully released, and advises the Government to reconsider the whole issue, bearing in mind the discoveries of other nations that have been using this for years.

TRANSPARENCY IN GOVERNANCE/LEADERSHIP:

The Church observes with worry that some people in leadership positions, from the Federal, State and Local Government levels constitute themselves into machines that block good governance, and calls on the Federal Government to note that war on corruption will be won when corrupt leaders and officers found guilty of these offences are brought to book.

The Church notes with dismay that the statutory allocation from the Federal Government to Local Government in Nigeria meant for development of rural communities have not been judiciously utilized.

The survival of democracy is based on the rule of law. The Church, therefore, calls on all tiers of Government to respect the rule of law by obeying all court orders.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND DEGRADATION OF HUMAN DIGNITY:

The Church has observed with shock the rate at which human trafficking thrives in the society and calls on the Federal Government to put in place every necessary machinery that can checkmate this evil trade, which has not respect for human life and degrades human dignity.

THE POLICE MORAL INTEGRITY:

The Church commends the effort of the Federal Government at sustaining the war against extortion of money and other police excesses, which are yielding dividends and notes with delight the zeal of the Acting Inspector General of Police, Mr. Sunday Ehindero in this regard in repositioning Nigeria Police.

The Church recommends to the Nigeria Police that standard educational qualification of at least a first university degree at the point of entry (i.e recruitment) must be of necessity to the rank and file of the police; the fear of God coupled with enhanced salary and welfare package, will go a long way to assisting the Police in its moral integrity.

RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE:

We commend Government's efforts in promoting religious harmony and urge all Nigerians to support this laudable programme.

INEC AUTONOMY:

The Government is urged to promote and ensure the autonomy of INEC for objective and acceptable result.

CHRISTIAN ORTHODOXY IN DOCTRINE AND MORALS:

The Church commends the Anglican Primates' Meeting for standing up for Orthodoxy in Church faith and morals by suspending ECUSA and Canada, and prays that this action will bring genuine repentance on ECUSA and Canada.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING/DEGRADATION OF HUMAN DIGNITY:

The Church observes with shock the rate at which human trafficking thrives in our society, and calls on the Federal Government to put necessary machinery in place to check this evil trade which has no respect for human life and degrades human dignity.

RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE/INTOLERANCE:

The Church commends Government efforts so far in promoting religious harmony and urges all Nigerians to support this effort of the Government because the existence of some evidence of intolerance among some religious groups towards others put to question the sincerity of such people. The Church, therefore, calls on the Government not to relent in its efforts at ensuring religious dialogues, not just among religious bodies but also among Youths and Schools and Colleges for effective and lasting religious tolerance.

INEC AUTONOMY:

The Church believes that INEC autonomy is a good thing and encourages the government to promote policies that will ensure the autonomy of INEC for a more objective electoral result.

CHRISTIAN ORTHODOXY IN DOCTRINE AND MORALS:

The Church commends the Anglican Primates' Meeting for standing up for Orthodoxy in Christian faith and morals by asking ECUSA and the Church in Canada to withdraw from Anglican Communion Meetings, a move which has effectively suspended ECUSA and the Church in Canada over their stance on human sexuality; and praying that this action will bring genuine repentance on the part of the erring Churches.

NEPA:

The Church commends the effort of the Government to sustain a steady gas and fuel pump price, but frowns at the erratic nature of NEPA distribution in many areas making many to spend heavily out of their pockets to get power from their private generators. The Church calls on the Government to look into this problem because modern development has everything to do with steady and affordable electricity supply.

UNIVERSITY HOSTEL:

The Church commends the courage of the Government to bring to a halt the services of the operators of Toll Gates across the nation, and calls on the Government in the same vein to revisit the issue of privatization of University Students' Hostels in order to reduce the risk in hiking costs of hostel accommodation.

ALEX IBRU – A NIGERIAN PHILANTHROPIST:

The Church notes with deep satisfaction and appreciation the magnanimity of Mr. Alex Ibru in donating a multi-million Naira Retreat Centre (**Ibru Centre**) to the Church and calls on all Nigerians to remember to use their materials endowments for the promotion of God's work and assistance of the less privileged in the society.

APPENDIX III
CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) STANDING COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD AT THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF
ST. MICHAEL, KADUNA
WEDNESDAY, 9TH –FRIDAY, 11TH MARCH, 2005.

Pastoral Letter to the Church:

Our beloved people of God,

The Standing Committee brings you greetings of love, peace and joy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, from its meeting here in Kaduna. A number of events, some pleasant and memorable, and some others unpleasant, have occurred since we met last in Enugu in all things, we thank God for life and health, and we glorify His name. The Standing Committee focused on **“TO OBEY IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE”** (1 Samuel 15:22).

After many years of fruitful ministry, Samuel was growing old. He, therefore, appointed his sons in his place as judges over Israel. Sons proved to be unfaithful and disappointing, leading Israel to request for a king as was the case with the surrounding nations. Saul was thus appointed and made king, but his performance turned out to be disastrous. Saul failed to carry out to the letter, the Lords' command to destroy Amalek. That failure of Saul attracted these worlds from Samuel to Saul ... **“To Obey is better than Sacrifice”**. With these opening words, we come face to face with daily choice in our lives as individuals, families, congregations, people and nations, whether to obey God or our own selfish desires, Examples of these situations that decide our choice of God or self, abound and a few examples will suffice:

- i. Church of Nigeria has the mission with **Vision 1-1-3**. We need to approach this with the spirit of obedience for fruitful results.
- ii. Church of Nigeria has the mission fund tagged, **“Endowment Fund”**. The spirit of attaining its goals is obedience to the letter

The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) has a choice to either given leadership to the Church in Africa or to carry on only with our own domestic mission agenda. We under God, chose the former resulting in the first **African Anglican Bishops' Conference (AABC)** between October 25 and November 1, 2004 in Lagos, which was a huge success. This obedience brought honour to God.

Bear in mind that obedience always has its sacrifices along the path, which should not be underrated. AABC was successfully hosted but it cost money of varying amounts from the Diocese, with some Dioceses, bearing somewhat heavy burden more than others. But together

wand with total obedience to the will of God for the Church in Africa, the event was a joy and glory.

On our main task of evangelism, the time has come when each Diocese needs to rise up , mobilize and empower the laity for large scale mission. This, in the spirit of obedience, will call for substantial and adequate provision for funding in Diocesan Budget.

We will continue to thank God for some of our brothers and sisters who in obedience to God give generously for the work of evangelism. Worthy of special mention is the magnanimity of Mr. Alex Ibru, who has made available to our Church a multi-million-Naira Retreat centre. We encourage all to emulate this worthy example.

The Standing Committee for now has resolved that the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) shall not commence the ordination of women. However, the issue may be re-visited in the future.

Our dear people of God, we entreat you to apply this principle of obedience in all your endeavour as individuals, families, people, congregation and State.

With prayerful wishes and warm regards.

Your Primate and Friend

MOST REVD. PETER J. AKINOLA, CON, DD
Primate of All Nigeria.