



# Contact

Newsletter of Sisters of St. Louis, Nigeria Province



■ A present day view of St. Louis Convent, Bompai, Kano, Nigeria, where the first three Sisters of St. Louis arrived in 1948

— edited by **Anthonia Eneanya, SSL**

**T**he Nigeria Province of the Sisters of St. Louis clocked seventy years on 14 February 2018. The foundation of the Sisters of St. Louis, Nigeria was marked by the arrival of the first three Sisters in Kano on 14 February 1948 at the invitation of the then Mgr. Mc Carthy. To mark this special day which coincided with year 2018 Ash Wednesday, Masses were requested in the different parishes close to the communities where Sisters live particularly in Kano, its first foundation. Preparations for the celebration are already underway. Prior to 14 February 2018, different committees had been put in place to see to the grand celebration of the Platinum jubilee of the St. Louis Sisters' presence in Nigeria. The cover article for February 2018 issue of *Contact* was written by **Sr. Gabrielle** in 1998 in *Link*, a magazine of the Irish Region, of which Sr. Gabrielle was the editor. By an act of Providence, **Sr. Mary Connellan** found the particular edition in which the story appears tucked into the annals of the Beaufort Downs community where Sr. Augustine Moane lived. She promptly scanned the pages and sent them to the SSL Communications Office in Nigeria. So,

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■ Kano: The first St. Louis Convent in Nigeria (source: *Link Magazine*)

as we warm up for the celebrations later in the year, let's go down memory lane.

## 1948 — Year of Nigeria

*Foundation of Kano and Ado (taken from the archives)*

*"Kano has really been established, for our Blessed Lord took up his abode this morning, blessed be his holy name" — Letter of M Collumbanus (21 Feb. 1948.)*

### Kano

[T]he year] 1948 saw the first two St. Louis Missions established in Nigeria. Actually, the first recorded request for missionaries for Nigeria had come as far back as 1945. In a letter from Belfast dated September 4 1945 Fr. P. J. Kerr S.M.A. wrote to Mother Columbanus on behalf of Mgr. Mc Carthy about "the possibility of your being interested in new foundations in the territory of Kaduna -- we are anxious to enlist your help in the mission in West Africa ... when you have been able to go into the matter ... we will be glad if you let me know your decision".

The decision was yes, and the sisters were to go to Kano a year later. However, as you read in the September *Link*, this had to be postponed and the first group went to Kumasi instead. But in February 1948 the first Nigerian group, Srs. M. Isabel. Augustine and Eymard set out with Sr. M. Regis in an ancient troop ship on its second last voyage. Mother Columbanus, that intrepid pioneer, had remained in Kumasi since the previous October, so it was arranged that Sr. Eymard would disembark with Marie James at Freetown and join her for the journey to Kano where they arrived on February 14. They were met by Fr. Duffy and taken to their temporary home, a mud building with a flat roof called Gidan Campbell. It had been occupied by a Scottish Education Officer, hence its name. Gidan is Hausa for "house of". Mrs Wade, a Mauritian, is remembered in many letters for her great kindness to our sisters – basins of water ready for the tired travellers, table laid, house in readiness. She had three

mosquito nets but as there were now five sisters. Mother Columbanus with her veteran experience in Kumasi set to and made two more.

Meantime M. Regis, Srs Augustine and Isabel arrived at Lagos and were welcomed by the O.L.A. Sisters and rested for the long train journey to Kano. The record of OLA kindness to our sisters is written deep in the memory of all our early missionaries. As they set off for Kano the sisters reminded them to watch out for Minna as some of the Fathers would surely be there to welcome them. However, nobody turned up, and as it was very late. M. Regis said that "she for one was going to bed" and she settled down in her upper bunk. The others waited 'just in case' and sure enough at nearly midnight the train pulled into Kaduna. There was a knock at the carriage door, Mgr. McCarthy introduced himself, and on behalf of Mother Columbanus, told them they were to get off the train here and stay with the OLA sisters. "But what about the luggage" said poor Sr. Regis from her top shelf, and Mgr. explained that he was to travel on to Kano with their 'loads'.

So, they collected themselves as quickly as possible. Sr. Regis "habited" herself as best as she could, and all hurried to a little shelter where they had tea as it was now nearly twelve, and if they waited to reach the OLA convent the midnight fast would have begun. (Isn't it easy to forget those realities). Anyway, somebody handed in Sr. Regis' daycap which fell on the platform! And they eventually arrived at the convent.

There was so much to learn in these days of briefing and again one marvels at the network of mutual support provided by the missionaries everywhere for each other. On February 18 they arrived in Kano. "We got here this morning at ten o'clock. Mother General. Msgr. McCarthy, Frs Dulfy and Balfe were on the platform to give us a hearty welcome" the letter says. With the freshness of first experience the details of those days are recorded in these early letters – the delegation of Christian women who came with "dash" of live chickens, eggs, fruits and an envelope of African money. And the formal welcome on Sunday morning by the Kano Catholic community when the hope was expressed that "the presence of the Rev. Mother and Sisters will remain as morning rays to the beautiful roses in the mind of our female section".

The sisters remained in Gidan Campbell for three months while permanent accommodation was being prepared out at Bompai where Msgr. McCarthy had acquired a former military camp with good buildings 6 miles away. In the meantime the sisters took classes at St. Thomas' School at the mission. They had girls from 8 until 12, and the masters took the boys in the afternoons. This school which had about 200 children in 1948 had expanded to 1500 within the next ten years. Then there were many Europeans, Syrians and Lebanese looking for classes for their children, so a

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small school for foreigners was established. A funny story from this venture is recorded in a letter from Sr. Eymard who was teaching a little girl how "to carry forward in addition" when her little brother piped up from the second row "our Meg cannot carry firewood, only donkeys can".

Up at Gidan Campbell the cook's name was Sunday. He was a Moslem and always wore his fez. But because he had been in the army he insisted on calling the refectory the 'mess room'. But, as Mother Columbanus remarked in her letter to Monaghan "he certainly can cook. and he launders beautifully." His wages were 1/3 a day.

The people were slow to send their girls to school but little by little when they saw the care the Sisters gave, they sent them in large numbers. It was clear too that a secondary school was on the horizon and would come very soon. But meantime the Sisters were having to take double shifts to cater for the numbers coming in, and M. Columbanus saw that another Sister would be urgently required to look after the European school. So, Sr Helena came in October with the Sisters going to Ado. 'Confusion, colour, jabbering and noise' is how she recorded her first impressions! 'Fair day in Carrickmacross couldn't come near it,' she remarked aptly. Her luggage included several fiddles. 'I used to wonder how the fiddles were getting on in the hold.' But seemingly they survived the voyage, and soon came into their own, as tunes and hymns were mastered at her daily band and choir sessions, and the English classes went on ahead. One day she was concerned about a Moslem child in the class and explained to the mother that there were R.E. classes. But the woman assured her 'You can teach my daughter all the religion you wish Madam. As long as it helps her to learn English it won't be a waste of time.'

A nice familiar detail appears in a letter from Kano of early October 1948 "The All-Ireland Final is on at home and we are very interested as Mayo and Cavan are playing" so it wasn't hard to discover that two of the community of three represented the important counties. It doesn't say who won that year!

## Ado

***"We had our first Mass in Ado on the Feast of the Rosary Oct. 7th" — Sr. Finian's letter from Ado (Oct. 1948)***

In late February 1948, Mother Columbanus and Sr M. Regis left Kano for Ado in order to assess the possibilities for the new foundation. Fr Martin Kenny recalled this journey many years later at the 1972 Silver Jubilee celebration in Nigeria. The Sisters were met at Ilorin by Bishop Hughes and Frs Kenny and McAfee. One

had a new car, the other an ancient Ford, but between Ilorin and Oro the brakes went, and all had to spend the night there. Next morning with no repairs possible, the Bishop and Fr. McAfee proceeded without brakes, while the Sisters drove with Fr Kenny at ten miles an hour on to Ado. Here, Mother Columbanus was shown the site for the new convent which at this stage consisted of a few trees cut down and two or three blocks of cement! Would anyone believe it could be ready in seven or eight months? She did. And nothing daunted she left for Ireland determined that the Sisters would be in Ado in the Autumn!

And in the Autumn the Sisters came, Srs. M. Finian and Leone, and a few weeks later, Sr M. Chrysostom. The people had no experience of Sisters and kept asking the Fathers 'When will the Lady Fathers come?' The said 'ladies' left Lagos on October 5th in a cavalcade of a three ton lorry and two cars. accompanied by Frs McAuley, Hurst and Murphy and all their loads, and two kittens and a dog. Suddenly down came the storm and the journey to Ibadan was in lightning. Deafening thunder and torrential rain. At Ibadan they were welcomed by Mother Brenda and her community, and the watchman. 'She had a beautiful supper for us and very comfortable beds.' Next morning, rested and refreshed they set out on the next 130 miles to Ado. At every mission station there were Fathers waiting to welcome them and speed them on their way. One of the most moving things in all these early letters is the sense of support and appreciation from seasoned missionaries for the newcomers. It must have been enormously heart-warming in those early stages.

About twelve miles outside Ado they were met by the Chief, his attendant, his couriers and some African Fathers. Having welcomed the Sisters, the Chief then led the cavalcade in his own car into Ado. Outside the village the whole people were waiting with trumpets, drums, noise. Guns going off and crowds waving Union Jacks. 'We proceeded slowly' wrote Finian 'trying our best to look like Princess Elizabeth and Margaret Rose!' There were speeches. And bowing and more dash... Then the Headmaster of the boys' school spoke to Leone who thought at first he was saying that all was over. She suddenly realised he was saying 'Here's your interpreter, a few words will do!' 'I don't know what I said' wrote Leone 'not that it mattered, because they kept cheering at every phrase!'

Finally, they arrived at the Mission and were met by Bishop Hughes and all the Fathers, and more crowds of people shouting and cheering their welcome. That evening they had a celebration dinner with the Bishop and all the priests. As the convent was not ready, it was arranged that they would use the Father's house which they had just vacated. And again, the touching references of kindness of Bishop Hughes. 'He told us', writes Finian, 'that he had the mattresses and blankets

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out airing in the sun the whole of the previous day, and he has cushions and curtains too for their new convent.' In the morning he said Mass for them and Finian writes 'I was glad our first Mass was on the feast of the Rosary'. He took the Sisters to see the convent which was to be ready in a month. Meantime he thought they should go to another house as it would be less uncomfortable than their present quarters, but left them free to choose. So, they stayed. 'We decided we might as well have a bit of real mission life. 'And so, ended their first day in Ado.

Schools got under way very quickly as the building was ready, but some of the infants were 12 years of age but had not been sent to school and many had not been baptised, so there was a lot of work waiting to be done. The letters tell of Confirmation classes for adults on one evening, Catechumens another day and still another for First Communion; these were all adults, the children were seen to in school. Of course, they had first to spend some weeks mastering Yoruba. And the letters described wonderfully colourful Church ceremonies and a celebratory people. Sr Chrysostom writes about the choir. The people 'had no trouble with the Gregorian

chant' and she had just done Regina Coeli and Victimae Paschali with them!

There was a great description too of the first telephone installed in an impressive installation ceremony with bands and flags. Then came the climax when the Ewi made the first call – 'to the Resident in Akure!'

And again, with the freshness of first experience they write of 'bats and lizards clinging to their mosquito nets at night' and 'the ripening fruit on orange, lemon and grapefruit trees'. They visited an interesting bush station too where the girls were dying and spinning cotton. Leone and Chrysostom were planning to pick it up... 'we hope to weave the material for our school uniform by next year'.

***And so 1948 drew to a close for Ado and Kano. It was a year full of promise and the idealism of young pioneers, promise that was to be more than richly fulfilled in the next 44 years. G.O'C.***

## L — Plates!

**W**hile the three Kano pioneers were sitting quietly in Monaghan waiting for their passages to Nigeria, there came an urgent letter from M. Columbanus in Kumasi - they were to learn to drive! ...It had surely to be a joke, but M. Columbanus was not given to joking. There were few cars in Monaghan in those post-war years, and certainly none in the Convent. Instructors were not even heard of ...But that's what the letter said. So Mary Gunn was summoned from Clontarf in her Ford car to do the needful. In piled her three pupils. one in front and two in the back - for their first lesson out the Clones road! Mary explained all she could, this is a gear. and here's the brake and this is how we make it start...First lesson was all theory. and the next day each sister had a 'wee try' just for 'starters'. But lo and behold, before the third lesson the sisters were told they would be leaving at once.... Off they went with one more skill 'supposedly' in their possession.

The morning after their arrival in Kano, M. Columbanus decided that they would go into town to open the account in the bank. 'You drive' she said to Isabel. One didn't dare say one had a third of a lesson twice] So M. Columbanus and Regis got in, and to Isabel's horror she realised that the machinery in front of her bore no resemblance to Mary Gunn's Ford. She couldn't get the car to start, and M. Columbanus said to Regis 'Can't you drive. didn't you drive in the war?' That being the 1914-18 war some 30 years before.

Reproduced from *Link Magazine*

when M. Regis did actually drive a jeep! But she did manage to get a cough or two out of the car, and then it stopped. So they all walked to the bank.

Later in the evening they were to go to a welcome party at the Mission, so Augustine and Isabel slipped out during siesta and attacked the recalcitrant car. They got it started and all looked rosy, except that it would only go backwards. However they eventually mastered it and all went off to the party. But Augustine was to drive home, and as darkness began to fall suddenly, she realised she had never found out where the lights were. Turning discreetly to the man on her right she asked him her question 'Sure I didn't even get learning yet' he said. But the Father on her left heard the -exchange. He laughed his head off and told the whole company! The cat was out of the bag. and the whole mission came out to instruct them and see them off. That's how you learn. But a thing they had never heard of was a licence! One day the policeman came up to the Mission to the Parish Priest, and said ' Do you know. your wives (a good Moslem policeman) are driving round without a licence! So much for L-plates! **GO'C**



■ A caricature of the bumpy ride (reproduced from the original publication)

## ST. LOUIS NURSERY AND PRIMARY SCHOOL, IKERE-EKITI, CELEBRATES 20 YEARS OF NURTURING YOUNG MINDS AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



LEFT: Most Rev. Felix Ajakaye with one of the old pupils of St. Louis N/P, Ikere, during his homily at the anniversary celebration RIGHT: Cutting of the anniversary cake with Sisters Isabel Mann, Rachel Alonge and Christiana Ogundele



### — Christiana Ogundele, SSL

The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration spanned a whole week, kicking off with the celebration of Mass by the Bishop of Ekiti Diocese, Most Rev. Dr. Felix Femi Ajakaye, in company of the Bishop Emeritus of Ekiti Diocese, Most Rev. Dr Michael Olatunji Fagun, as well as other priests from within and outside Ekiti diocese.

Following the Mass was a colourful carnival procession hosted by the school pupils to celebrate and create awareness of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration within Ikere Community. The carnival procession led a host of parents, pupils, teachers and the management to pay a royal courtesy visit to His Majesty, Oba Samuel Adejimi, the Ogoga of Ikere-Ekiti.

Tuesday 12 December 2017, the second day of the celebration witnessed a successful symposium with talks on 'THE IMPRINT OF OUR JOURNEY: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow', delivered by old and present parents, old pupils and some of the headmistresses since the inception of the school. Sr Isabel Mann, Provincial Leader of the Sisters of St. Louis, Nigerian Province, was in attendance. Adding more colour to the day was also a charity visit of the pupils, some staff and management team to an orphanage at Iyin-Ekiti.

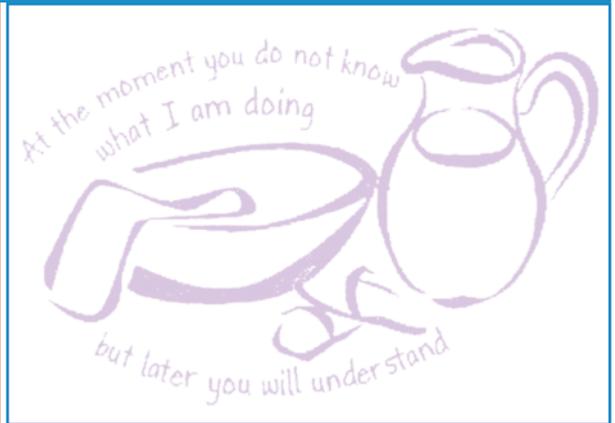
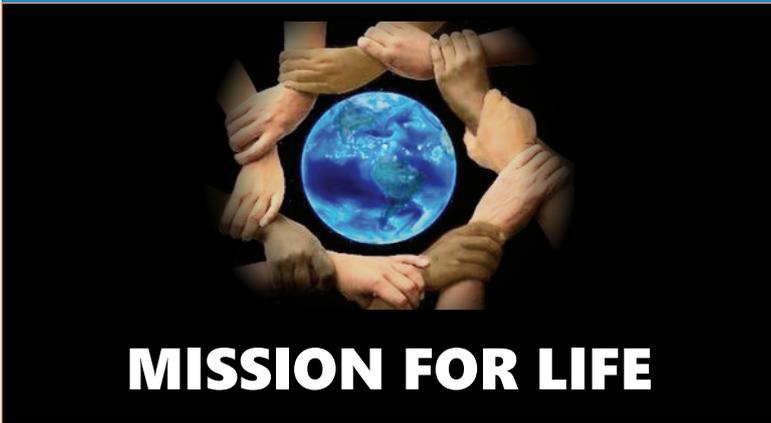
Wednesday 13, day three, was set aside for old pupils, parents and staff novelty matches. The old pupils' dinner and re-union was billed for the later

hours of same day. The dinner was graced by different SETs; starting from the first to the sixteenth graduated set. It was a reunion indeed in all ramifications. The reunion birthed the inauguration of the St. Louis Old Pupils Association (SLOPA) of the school. Seven officers from among them were immediately selected to pilot the initial phase of the association. Thursday 14 came with buzz and excitement. It was the pupils' class party. As the pupils were accustomed to, they arrayed themselves in colourful Christmas dresses complemented with all sorts of Christmas accessories. The day was rounded off with a fund-raising dinner for the continual support of the school scholarship scheme to enrol more Ikere indigent children in the school.

Friday 15 was the grand finale of the anniversary. All and sundry, including the representative of the Sisters of St Louis from various communities and apostolates flocked into the school compound, not just to celebrate with us but also to be entertained by our world class presentations. The St. Louis Old Pupils Association, Ikere (SLOPA) was officially inaugurated on that day.

In all, the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration did not fall short of expectation. It was a glamorous week for St. Louis Nursery and Primary School, Ikere Ekiti. It was indeed a simple but fulfilling celebration, bringing joy and living a memory to last a life time.

## Deepening GC 2015 Calls



— Akure Community

Wherever we are sent to live as a community and work on mission, there are ripple effects. All of us for instance cannot go to Ethiopia but we can still mission where we are. In the midst of the current realities of our society which include kidnapping, Fulani herdsmen attacks, robbery, economic recession among others with their adverse effects on peace, security and life expectancy, we can resolve to make life easier for those we work and live with by being just and prompt in payment of salaries. We should hold on to our values and traditions because we need them now more than ever. There is the need to support one another especially in the face of difficulties and challenges. As much as we look out to help and support people, we ourselves should be charitable to one another because we cannot give what we do not have.

**We should hold on to our values and traditions because we need them now more than ever.**

We are equally thinking aloud why there seems to be no personnel for Mission at various stages such may be needed in spite of our current number of 128. There is probably need for more empowerment for Mission locally and globally. Meanwhile, we should be prudent in the use of technological tools so that they do not become objects of endangering ourselves and others.

**Timetable for contributions to GC Calls (2015)  
2018 theme: *Mission for Life***

NO	COMMUNITIES	MONTH
1	Akure & Akpassi	February 2018 ✓
2	Bida & Ondo	March 2018
3	Dassa & Owo	April 2018
4	Ewulu & Etampes	May 2018
5	Gidan Mariya & Grigny	June 2018
6	Gwagwalada & Ipaja	July 2018
7	Ijio, LGHS & Uromi	August 2018
8	Ikere, ALBRC & Iseyin	September 2018
9	Kano & Kolapo	October 2018
10	Mokola & Marywood	November 2018
11	Oka, Novitiate & Zonkwa	December 2018



3rd	Sr. Mary Okewola	Birthday
7th	Sr. Perpetua Oloba	Feastday
17th	Sr. Patricia Ojo	Feastday
17th	Sr. Patricia Ebegbulem	Feastday
25th	Sr. Maureen Ugbo	Feastday

# Religious Life: A Gift of God to His Church

by Augusta Ozor, SSL

**W**e all gathered joyfully on 2 February 2018 at Mary Help of Christians, Araromi, Akure, the venue for the celebration of 2018 consecrated persons day in Ondo diocese. The religious, both male and female, priests as well as lay faithful were all delighted to be part of this year's celebration. We began with the sacrifice of Holy Mass at 10am. The day being the feast of the presentation of our Lord also, we all gathered outside the church for prayers and blessing of our candles which were in turn lit before we proceeded into the church.

The chief shepherd of Ondo diocese, Bishop Jude Arogundade was the chief celebrant. He welcomed all to the celebration and in his words exhorted all to know that consecrated life is a gift of God to the Church. Hence, consecrated persons are expression of that gift. Making reference to the recent killings in Benue state and its environs, he pointed out that our works as consecrated persons are so huge and include the mandate to instruct the ignorant, most especially those who do not value the dignity of the human person. He further observed that consecrated persons should know that they have more at stake than the rest of the Christian fold; the society needs them more now than ever and there are so many commitments they can make to move the Church forward.

After the celebration of the Holy Mass, we gathered for the reception where we were well entertained by different groups including the SSL novices, pupils St. Louis Nursery and Primary School and pupils of Bishop Hughes Nursery and Primary School, both in Akure. The bishop who was also in attendance at reception continued with his admonition, calling us to shun the spirit of possession and gratification but instead work selflessly. He called on us to be aware of the crises of faith that looms around, which so many consecrated persons are victims of. He rounded up with the words of appreciation to all the consecrated persons working in Ondo diocese and helping to move the faith forward. "I want to thank you for what you do. Every day, you risk your life for the sake of mission, bear in mind that in bearing witness to the gospel, you have to lose something -- but be rest assured of the



L-R: Sister Josephine Tiav, Bishop Jude Arogundade and Sr. Charity, HHCT (Out gone president of NCWR, Ondo area).



A cross-section of consecrated persons at the event

enormous blessings that comes after your loss. Remember God is with us as He is Emmanuel who will always be. Be proud of your work; work with dignity. Thank you from the bottom of my heart"



The Presentation at the Temple  
WORLD DAY FOR CONSECRATED LIFE

## RECEPTION CEREMONY OF NEW POSTULANTS INTO THE INSTITUTE OF THE SISTERS OF ST LOUIS

by *Elizabeth Okoh and Catherine Kekere*

"The greatest journeys are made because of the call of the heart" This phrase being the theme of the reception prayer re-echoed to us as we were received as postulants on 2 February 2018. The day was a remarkable day as it coincided with the Feast of the presentation of our Lord which is one of the remarkable feasts of the church.

The event began with a brief introduction and opening speech led by Sr Agnes Abba, the postulants mistress. She started by welcoming us and enjoined us to be determined and open to all formative processes. She told us to be open to new teachings because the religious life is a life that is deeply rooted in Christian charity and love. It is a life that is not always a bed of roses, but a life of true discipleship that requires courage. She reiterated the fact that we will experience difficulties, trials and challenges but we are to lean solely on Jesus who has promised his children a safe arrival.

The prayer session began with a hymn to the Holy Spirit, invoking God's presence into our midst. The scripture reading was taken from the Book of Sirach 2:1-18, followed by a soulful reflection on the spiritual journeys that Christians make. Sr Theresa Peter Sheyin then presented us for reception. The eight of us: **Bridget Attah, Catherine Kekere, Celestina Isaac, Elizabeth Oguche, Elizabeth Okoh, Immaculata Mayaki, Josephine Ojo and Mary Okafor** were received by Sr Margaret Yusufu. She questioned our motive and desire and having heard our responses,



L-R: BACK ROW: Catherine Kekere, Elizabeth Okoh, Bridget Attah, Josephine Ojo FRONT ROW: Immaculata Mayaki, Elizabeth Oguche, Celestina Isaac and Mary Okafor

handed us to the postulants mistress who admitted us into the Institute of the Sisters of St. Louis as postulants and commended us to God to bless our desires. She prayed for us and presented to us the Divine Office, which is the official prayer of the church and the Praying Companion that adds more beauty in praising God.

We presented a special number titled "Amazing Grace" in thanksgiving to God. Our joy reached its peak when Sr Margaret invited the sisters to officially welcome us as members of the community. The sisters gave us some pieces of advice and we concluded our prayers and moved to the dining room where we had a sumptuous meal.

We are grateful to the Institute and all the sisters in Nigeria Province for their support and for this great opportunity given to us to become members of the St Louis family. May God help us to be faithful and open to formation. Amen.

## How Intelligent are You?

by *Miss. Mary Ahkiba (Teacher)*



SOURCE: [wikia.nocookie.net/](http://wikia.nocookie.net/)

For teachers of Louisville Nursery and Primary school, Oremoji, Mokola, Ibadan, the term began with an exciting workshop on levels of intelligence on 5 January 2018. Sr. Christie Udebor SSL took the teaching staff in a lesson of seven types of intelligence which are: verbal/linguistics, visual/spatial, interpersonal, musical/rhythmic, logical/mathematical, interpersonal

and bodily/kinaesthetic. The teachers discovered their aptitudes by filling a questionnaire which revealed the percentage of the different levels of each teacher's intelligence.

Any individual using insight from the theory Howard Gardner has capacity to be intelligent in seven different ways, although in unequal percentages, Sister Christie explained. Each type of intelligence,

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**T**he Nigerian Conference of Women Religious (NCWR) in a show of love for the country Nigeria and reinforcement of the fact that human life is and remains sacred held a one day National Day of Prayers for Nigeria on 14 February with the theme: **Nigerian Catholic Nuns Uphold the Sacredness of Human Life through Prayers.** According to them, in addition to prayers, those charged with ensuring the protection of lives of Nigerians should wake up to their responsibilities. In the same vein, our leaders should think more of the people instead of themselves.

The Women Religious in Ibadan, Nigeria gathered at St. Gabriel Catholic Church, Mokola, Ibadan for the prayer. Addressing fellow Religious Women, Sr. Emmanuel Ladipo, HHCJ, President of the Conference in Ibadan, thanked those who were present and urged everyone to pray fervently for our dear country.

The programme began with rosary procession, praise and thanksgiving songs, scripture reading and sharing and **'Thank**



## IBADAN NCWR HOLDS NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR NIGERIA *by Anthonia Eneanya, SSL*

**You Jesus'** rosary. Amidst several sharing by some individual Religious present, Sr. Bridget Agum, SSL encouraged all Religious who were present to work hard towards attaining peace in all ramifications since it is the desire of every follower of Christ. That peace, she said, can only be achieved in Nigeria through witnessing to Christ. To end the prayer session was the prayer of intercessions in which the various religious congregations were represented.

Sr. Isabel Mann, SSL who was recognised and appreciated for her active role in making sure that the National day prayer also holds in Ibadan thanked all for their active participation and encouraged them to continue to pray for Nigeria. Not less than nine congregations were represented at the event.

## Our Visit to Home of Peace and Mercy, Uromi

*by Augusta Ozor SSL*

**O**n Sunday 12 February, the three of us: Sisters Agnes Adeluyi, Jatau Judith and Ozor Augusta drove down to Uromi Edo State from Oka community in Ondo State to pay a courtesy visit to the sisters in Uromi community and the residents (that is clients) of Home of Peace and Mercy, where they do care-giving work. The sisters gave us a warm welcome on our arrival and took us to greet the residents who had gathered in a large sitting room to meet us. We were later taken on a tour of the facility by Sr. Victoria Orifunmische. Thereafter, we had lunch together with the sisters and the residents. Our short stay with them made us appreciate the huge task the sisters undertake daily in giving round-the-clock care to the residents because of their age and health. We ask God to continue to renew the strength of the sisters as they engage in such enormous task as caregivers.



L-R: Sisters Victoria Orifunmische, Augusta Ozor and Philomena Williams with residents of Home Peace and Mercy, Uromi

**AN EXCERPT FROM THE ADDRESS PRESENTED BY THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF NIGERIA (CBCN) ON THE OCCASION OF A COURTESY CALL ON HIS EXCELLENCY MOHAMMADU BUHARI, PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA, THURSDAY, 8 FEBRUARY 2018**

**Y**our Excellency, there is too much suffering in the country: poverty, hunger, joblessness, insecurity, violence, fear... the list is endless. Our beloved country appears to be under siege. Many negative forces seem to be keeping a stranglehold on the population, especially the weaker and defenceless ones. There is a feeling of hopelessness across the country. Our youths are restive and many of them have taken to hard drugs, cultism and other forms of violent crime, while many have become victims of human trafficking. The Nation is nervous.

Just as we seem to be gradually emerging from the dark tunnel of an economic recession that caused untold hardship to families and individuals, violent attacks by unscrupulous persons, among whom are terrorists masquerading as herdsmen, have led to a near civil war situation in many parts of the country. We are saddened that, repeatedly, innocent citizens in different communities across the nation are brutally attacked and their sources of livelihood mindlessly destroyed. Lives are wasted and property, worth billions of Naira, including places of worship, schools, hospitals and business enterprises are torched and turned to ashes. We are still more saddened by the recent massacre of unarmed citizens by these terrorists

in some communities in Benue, Adamawa, Kaduna and Taraba States which has caused national shock, grief and outcry. The silence of the federal government in the wake of these horrifying attacks is, to say the least, shocking. There is a feeling of helplessness among the people and the danger that some people may begin to take laws into their hands.

We therefore earnestly urge the government to take very seriously its primary responsibility of protecting the lives and property of its citizens and ensure that such mindless killings do not reoccur. Herdsmen may be under pressure to save their livestock and economy but this is never to be done at the expense of other people's lives and means of livelihood. We would like to add our voice to those of other well-meaning Nigerians who insist that a better alternative to open grazing should be sought rather than introducing "cattle colonies" in the country. While thinking of how best to help cattle owners establish ranches, government should equally have plans to help the other farmers whose produce is essential for our survival as a nation.

In a similar vein, daredevil kidnappers, who at present are having a field day, with a feeling of invincibility, must be made to understand that there is a government in this country.

Government should invest more in equipping our Police Force with modern high-tech devices that will help them track down and arrest these criminals and make them face the wrath of the law.

The Federal Character Principle is enshrined in the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria: "The government of the Federation or any of its agencies and the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity and also to command national loyalty, thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from a few states or from a few ethnic or other sectional groups in that government or in any of its agencies" (Section 14, Sub-section 3-4). Disregard for this Principle in some federal government appointments as well as perceptible imbalance in the distribution of federal amenities has created the loss of a sense of belonging in many parts of the country, hence the constant cries of marginalization, agitation for secession and calls for restructuring.

These and many more such problems are, in our opinion, grave matters that should be worrying all political leaders in our country today, rather than any bid for re-election.

**ETERNAL REST GRANT UNTO HIM LORD...**

The SSL Nigeria Province commiserate with the Catholic Diocese of Kanfanchan on the passing to Glory of Most Rev Dr. Joseph Danlami Bagobiri, the Catholic Bishop of Kanfanchan Diocese whose sad event took place in the early hours of Tuesday 27 February 2018. We pray for the happy repose of his soul as well as remember in our prayers, the priests, religious and laity of the Catholic Diocese of Kanfanchan at this challenging moment.

*(as originally announced by)*  
**Rev. Fr. Chris N Anyanwu**  
 Director of Social Communications  
 Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria



# Heart of the MATTER

by Rita Akin-Otiko, SSL

## The Climate Change Analogy

**C**limate change and global warming is a topical issue. It is rightly so because it is a source of concern for every single inhabitant of mother earth. According to The United States government agency, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), “the planet's average surface temperature has risen about 2.0 degrees Fahrenheit (1.1 degrees Celsius) since the late 19th century, a change driven largely by increased carbon dioxide and other human-made emissions into the atmosphere. Most of the warming occurred in the past 35 years, with 16 of the 17 warmest years on record occurring since 2001. Not only was 2016 the warmest year on record, but eight of the 12 months that make up the year — from January through September, with the exception of June — were the warmest on record for those respective months.” NASA proffers two possible long-term solutions which they tagged “mitigation” and “adaption.” Mitigation involves “reducing and stabilizing the levels of heat-trapping greenhouse gases in the atmosphere”, while adaption is “adapting to the climate change already in the pipeline.” They suggest adoption of either or both solutions.

Up until the early 1980s, Nigeria was highly respected globally, and particularly in Africa. Once upon a time, she was regarded as the giant of Africa. Our oil, numerous natural resources, exemplary human capitals and amazing hospitality were a few of our remarkable assets. Since the early 1990s however, we have been experiencing palpable “climate change” and “national warming” in every sector of our country – education, health, economy, oil, housing, infrastructure in general, and security which has regrettably brought the giant of Africa to its knees.

In most sub-Saharan African nations, there is a type of climatic change which unfortunately is occasioned by the people voted into leadership under “feigned democracy” – government of some people, by some people, for some people. Nigeria has experienced uninterrupted democracy since May 29, 1999 – That’s 19 years ago! According to United Nations (UN) childhood ends at age 18. In Nigeria, as in most countries, 18 is the age of eligibility for voting, that is, eligibility for mature reasoning and decision-making. Unfortunately, even at



SOURCE: <https://i.ytimg.com/vi/iFrHogDujXw/maxresdefault.jpg>

19, there has not been much development in Nigeria because our democracy is “feigned democracy”. It is no news that in some parts of the country, minors are conscripted into rigging regiments with massive electoral malpractices and falsification of election results. With this backdrop of leadership selection, what do we expect?

The immediate past administration left a legacy of corruption with impunity. During their administration, most government critics were silenced by being made

Barely six months into the “rule of change”, the nation started experiencing an increase in corruption and other “human-made dehumanising emissions” ...! as had never been witnessed in the history of Nigeria.

members of ad hoc committees or by being given some other forms of gratification such that many of Nigeria’s voices of reason gradually fizzled into oblivion. Now, our national image is so dented by failed governance that travelling with the Nigerian passport could be an ordeal as we are perceived as potentially corrupt, and so, must be subjected to embarrassing and humiliating scrutiny. I have been a victim umpteen times. Sadly, the giant of Africa has been brought to its knees! How are the mighty fallen!

—continued on page 12



# Contact

EDITORIAL

## Platinum Greetings



**THE CLIMATE CHANGE ANALOGY** —continued from page 11

When the incumbent administration started dangling the “broom of change” before Nigerians’ despairing eyes, many Nigerians took to them because they were desperately seeking change. It may interest us to know that NASA undertook many decades of data collection and employed critical theory analysis before proffering the two solutions of mitigation and/or adaptation to assuage global warming and climate change. Unlike NASA, we were too impatient for a change to the corruption-ridden milieu of Nigeria that we failed to employ either deep spiritual discernment or required intellectual acumen in such an aggravating situation. We only followed the fallacious reverberating shouts of c-h-a-n-g-e!!!! Barely six months into the “rule of change”, the nation started experiencing an increase in corruption and other “human-made dehumanising emissions” such as massacre, corruption, terrorism, raping, kidnapping, armed robbery, inflation, unemployment, and general decline in quality of life as had never been witnessed in the history of Nigeria. The climate of Nigeria has unequivocally changed for the worse. I fear that if there is no urgent and appropriate solution, be it “mitigation” and/or “adaptation” to this degenerative change, the centre may not hold much longer as things daily fall apart, and mere anarchy is loosed upon our beloved land. Shalom.

<https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence>

**INTELLIGENCE** —continued from page 8

however could be developed in an individual up to at least average level. There is, however, a strongest point or level of intelligence for every individual. This is where he or she would perform best in life. The pupils of a class may have types of intelligence different from that of their teacher. This does not mean they are dull. It is the teacher's duty to ensure that his lesson plan and organisation incorporates most, if not all the levels of intelligence, so that every child, irrespective of his type of intelligence will benefit from the lesson. Also, objects that have something to do with the different levels of intelligence should form the decoration of the classroom.

Pupils who have types of intelligence which tilt more towards the affective or psychomotor domain should be appreciated but also be encouraged to develop cognitive intelligence up to at least average level.

Dear Sisters and friends,

We bring you Platinum blessings from Nigeria as the Province clocks seventy years! The majority of us were not born when this Mustard-seed was planted. But today we live to enjoy the fruits and are even the fruits of this mustard-seed that has grown to be a tree.

We remember with gratitude, the three great missionaries — Sisters M. Isabel. Augustine Moane and Eymard who came, saw and conquered, living indelible marks in history of the SSL in Nigeria

Reproduced verbatim in this edition is a story captioned **1948 — Year of Nigeria**, which was originally published in **Link**, a publication of the Irish Region. We are indebted to Sr. Mary Connellan who discovered the story made it available to all of us. We hope you will find it interesting and educative as we do. Kindly join us as we continue to tell our story from generations to generations.

We leave you with the words of Florence Nightingale *“... never lose an opportunity of urging a practical beginning, however small, for it is wonderful how often in such matters the mustard-seed germinates and roots itself”*. The Sisters of St. Louis, Nigeria Province is practically this mustard-seed that has germinated and rooted itself.

Long live the Sisters of St. Louis!  
Long live SSL Nigeria Province!

*Anthonia Eneanya*



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« **Word to Live By** »

*“I like the night. Without the dark, we'd never see the stars.”*

— **Stephanie Meyer,**  
*Twilight*



**CORPORATE EMAIL**  
The Communications Office now has a corporate email, [sslcomm.ng@gmail.com](mailto:sslcomm.ng@gmail.com). Expect to get *Contact* and updates via the mail address regularly. Write to us too.