



L-R: Sisters Rachel Ojo and Jacinta Otene (far left); Faith Ehiosu and Monica Adeya (far right) with Fidelia Amoko, Lucia Adenle, Madeleine Ohiri, Veronica Obi (four of the high-flying graduates) at the convocation ceremony in Lagos

HIGHFLYING SSL AMBASSADORS

— Rachel Ojo, SSL

Thursday 7 June 2018 was a glorious day for the SSL, Nigeria as Sisters Mary John, Veronica Obi, Fidelia Amoko, Lucia Adenle and Madeleine Ohiri had their convocation at St Augustine College of Education, Akoka, Yaba Lagos. The presence of some dignitaries from the institution, the University of Ibadan and particularly His Grace, Archbishop Alfred Adewale Martins, the Archbishop of Lagos Archdiocese added more colour to the day.

Our hearts are filled with gratitude to God because our Sisters allowed the school to pass through them without losing their identity. Their excellent performance is a confirmation of their being focused and being good ambassadors of the Sisters of St. Louis. We congratulate these five Sisters of ours and wish them well as they bring to bear their great achievements on mission.

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HIGHFLYING SSL AMBASSADORS —continued from page 1

Here is the honours list: **Sisters Lucia Adenle** emerged the **Valedictorian** at the convocation as well as **best graduating** student of Economics Unit 2014/2015 session with **first class honours** and **the overall best student** in B.Ed. Degree 2014/2015 session. **Sister Veronica Obi** graduated as the **best graduating** student of English Unit 2014/2015 session with **first class honours**. Sister Fidelia Amoko graduated with **first class honours** from Economics

unit 2014/2015 session. Sister Mary John emerged **best graduating** student of Social Studies unit 2016/2017 session and Sister Madeleine Ohiri emerged **best graduating** student of English Unit 2016/2017 session with **first class honours** and **overall best student** in B.Ed Degree 2016/2017 session.

We continue to give praise and thanks to God whose power working in us can do more than we can ever ask or imagine!



■ Sisters Fidelia Amoko, Madeleine Ohiri, Angela Onyema, Lucia Adenle and Veronica Obi



■ Our graduands with their colleagues from other congregations

A TASTE OF MONTESSORI METHODS

— **Akinwumi Opeyemi, Teacher**

Three teachers from Louisville Nursery & Primary School, Mokola, Ibadan had the opportunity of a lifetime to participate in a fun-filled continuing education workshop, based on Montessori classroom methods, for teachers of early year pupils on 3 June 2018. There were 19 participants at the hands-on workshop, which focus on building a total child through physical, cognitive, language, emotional and social development. Montessori methods emphasise relating concrete to Abstract, treating every child as important and sacred. It also promotes helping the child to fulfil its greatest potential, and identifying the hand as a pathway to a child's intelligence. The teacher as the demonstrator is charged to give freedom to children and never do for a child what he or she can do herself or himself. He or she should work with each child, not the class.



■ Participants at the workshop

Some of the Montessori recommendations we took away from the workshop include the following:

- Montessori recommends that nursery school classes should be beautifully decorated.
- A class should be managed by two teachers.
- Teachers should have adequate learning aids to make the most of Montessori methods in the classroom.

KOLAPO-ISHOLA COMMUNITY HOSTS 2018 IBADAN AREA OPEN DAY

— **Anthonia Eneanya, SSL**

Sunday 10 June 2018 was a joyful day for the Friends, Associates and Sisters of St. Louis, Ibadan Area as they converged at Divine Mercy Catholic Church, Monatan, Ibadan to celebrate the year 2018 Thanksgiving and Open Day.

The event started with the sacrifice of the Holy Mass celebrated by the Parish Priest, Rev. Fr. Julius Sangokeye. The Mass was offered for the special intentions of the Sisters of St. Louis. While speaking to the parishioners of Divine Mercy Catholic Church, Fr.

Sangokeye encouraged them to always support the Mission of Christ by supporting the servants of God. He pointed out that the Sisters engage in various missionary apostolates that need the support of everyone. He further explained that the choice of Divine Mercy Catholic Church as the venue for the year 2018 Thanksgiving and Open of the Ibadan Area is an honour for the Parish. He therefore enjoined the parishioners to support the Sisters.

Lunching and sales began immediately after the Thanksgiving Mass. Among the items sold at the event were raw and cooked rice, on

spot Puff-Puff, locust beans, shea butter, fruits, Suya (beef barbeque), Kunu and mango puree drink.

The communities represented from the Ibadan Area include Ijio, Iseyin, Kolapo-Ishola and Mokola Communities. Also present at the event were invited guests, Friends, Associates, pupils and staff of Louisville Nursery and Primary School, Mokola, Ibadan and Priest and parishioners of Divine Mercy Catholic Church, Monatan. It was indeed a joyful day as all sang and danced joyfully till the end to the glory of God.



Sr. Isabel Mann with the pupils of LNPS, Mokola, Ibadan during thanksgiving procession



In thanksgiving mood with the Priest and parishioners of Dive Mercy Catholic Church, Monatan, Ibadan



Some SSL novices at the Thanksgiving Mass



Louisville N/P School, Mokola, Ibadan, pupils entertain guests at the event

Let God fill-in the Empty Space

(REPORT OF TEMPORARY PROFESSED SISTERS WEEKEND IN KANO)

— Juliana Ajayi, SSL

The weekend, Friday 4 to Sunday 6 May, was indeed a splendid time of grace for us eight temporary professed Sisters of Gwagwalada Area and their mistress (Sr Christiana Kure). We were together in Kano community for our second weekend in the year to be nourished through prayers, reflections and sharing. The coming together afforded us the grace to knock out all forms of busyness, preoccupations, living everything right then and allow God to speak to us in the depth of our being, and fill in the EMPTY SPACE in us as we struggle to be better Christians in our service to God in humanity.

We had moments of silence and reflections on Mathew 14: 13-21 (feeding of the five thousand) and the different symbols of prayer as each sister presented. We were challenged to focus on Jesus in prayer, patience and poverty for him to remove all the dirt, hurts, distractions, pains, anxieties, and fears ... and fill us with fresh graces and nourishments for the mission ahead, just as he did to the crowd in the passage we read. The exercise was a lesson for us to be faithful stewards and imitators of Christ, an invitation for us to live and strive to engage in relevant needs and not just work for the sake of work but with the hope that the Spirit and Charism of our founders live on, making Christ known to all people we come in contact with us as Sisters of St Louis. This grace has been given to us freely, so we must not keep it but offer it freely to others again and again so that generations to come may gain and the mission will continue. We must totally trust in God of providence in order to give life to the people entrusted into our care.

As an area, we dug down to the **Part One: French Origins, of our Centenary Story of the Sisters of St Louis** titled **God Wills It** by Sr Mary Pauline, published in 1959. We looked at the cast seed on the feast of Sacred Heart, 23 June 1797, Louis Bautain and the fathers of St Louis, the establishment at Juilly, the Spirit of the congregation of the Sisters of St Louis, Irish Tributary, a period of New and Old Friendship, the storm and stress in Abbé Bautain's life from 1847 to 1849 and a period of waiting for the call, the industrial and reformatory movement and preparations.



The centre piece at the weekend

The sharing and reflections challenged us to follow in the footsteps of our ancestors by committing ourselves to life of service, unity in the community and apostolates especially among the Sisters. We also discussed simplicity in our prayer, common life and transforming our interest into a common goal. In the past, people were attracted to our ancestors to join them, but today, why is it that our pupils' and students are not interested in joining us? If I changed, allowed myself to be healed, the world around me would change. Each of us would have to take responsibility to bring in people by the way we live our lives. The study invites us not to allow our misplaced patriotism to come between us and our vocation. We should let go of sentiment, be objective and positive, be in solidarity with what is right and that can bring transformation to all of us. We should be courageous to speak out and to the right channel when things are not going on well.

At the end of the weekend, we resolved to make conscious efforts like Abbé Bautain who (as recorded by Abbé Regny) forged ahead with constant prayer, speaking little, calmly fulfilling the duties of each day, in total trust in Gods will for him and his spiritual daughters. We left, encouraged to talk about issues and settle them when they arise. It is only then we can break the chain of discord in our communities and act as wound healers thereby transmitting joy, peace and unity. No matter the tough road, speak only helpful words that will build people and meet their needs.

QuotesWiki

Like a fountain of refreshing water in the dusty, dry desert streets, a heart God fills with His love ministers life and health.

Elizabeth George



PHOTOS: Sr. Christie Udebor with family and fellow Sisters at the burial of her late father

SR. UDEBOR'S FATHER'S BURIAL

Friday 15 June 2018 saw another gathering of the St. Louis family in Warri for the burial of another late parent, late Sir David Irorobeje Udebor, the Father of Sister Christie Udebor.

Sir David Udebor was said to have lived a very simple life. He was described above all as a disciplinarian and a man of integrity. Sr. Christie Udebor in her tribute wrote:

Imaginations are magnificent thoughts
Thoughts are powerful ways of expressing imaginations.

I imagined how my father's soul left his body in the very quiet early hours of Wednesday 25 April, 2018. Then his body fell into that deep slumber of finality.

I imagined how peaceful and calm.
As calm as a sleeping baby.
All around the room was busy and troubled.

The loud voices around can no longer be heard.
The silence then, absolute.

I imagined and envisioned the gentle voices of the heavenly angels chanting and singing hymns of welcome

Their voices as clear as crystals
Welcoming my father, our father into the dawn of the NEW DAY.
And a NEW BEGINNING.

Wow! It feels like home
A reunion with the ancestors
Its sounds like opening new doors of opportunities
It tastes like an aura of mystery
It looks like puffy clouds...

Home sweet home.
There is no place like home.



PHOTOS: Sr Maria Ehikiya in action in a football match between CWO and CMO of Divine Mercy Catholic Church, Monatan, Ibadan recently



Sr. Veronica Orunmoluyi performs "dust to dust".

SSL join the family of Orunmoluyi as they bury their late father

— **Anthonia Eneanya, SSL**

The Sisters of St. Louis from every nook and cranny of the Province gathered at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Akure, on Friday 1 June 2018 to bid farewell to one of their parents —late Pa Michael Elijah Orunmoluyi— the father of Sr. Veronica Orunmoluyi. It will be recalled that Mrs. Julianah Mobolaji Abike Orunmoluyi, the late mother of the same Sr. Veronica Orunmoluyi, was also laid to rest on 2 June 2017.

According to Rev. Fr. Anslem Ologunwa, in his homily, Pa Orunmoluyi was a man of faith. He was an upright and devout man, a Catholic to the core. He was a faithful and honest man, who always longed to be united with Christ through the Body and Blood of Christ (the Holy Communion). He was a man who even in his old age would always be the first person to arrive to the Church for the weekly morning Masses.

Pa Orunmoluyi was said to be someone who was very much involved in the life of the Church at the



Sacred Heart Cathedral and at the diocesan level. He mentored many people, tutored many couples for marriage classes and sponsored many couples. He served in various capacities in the Church as member, chairman, patron and also founder of Egbe Iranlowo Oluwa Cooperative Multipurpose Society.

For those in places of honour, the life of late Pa Orunmoluyi is an example to follow. Before his death, Pa Orunmoluyi was made the Mayegun Ijo of Sacred Heart Cathedral. This he took as an added responsibility in serving God, his church and humanity. He tirelessly laboured in the Lord's vineyard till death.

Pa Orunmoluyi will be remembered not only by members of his Catholic faith but also by non-Catholics and non-Christians who knew him very well as the "Baba" in charge of the maintenance of the Catholic burial ground.

Pa Micheal Elijah Orunmoluyi lived on earth for 95 years. May his soul rest in peace.



PHOTOS: Sr Christiana Ibiang with fellow Sisters and family at the burial of her father

Painfully, Dad walked away

— Orunmoluyi Veronica, SSL

Seventeen (17) Sisters of St. Louis from eleven (11) communities took to the western and northern roads that led to Egbizum, Ikpakapit, Ugep town of Yakurr Local Government Area in Cross River State on Friday 22 June 2018. The journey terminated at the compound of Late Chief Stephen Usani Iwara, father of one of us, Sr. Christiana Ibiang. Chief Usani Iwara answered his heavenly father's home call on Friday 1 June 2018 at the age of 73. He was popularly called and known as "Acid", a name ascribed to him because "he was the first person in Ikom to recharge batteries with acid". Ikom is a bustling business town not far from Ugep where he lived, worked and raised his family.

The caption, "Painfully, dad walked away", was used by the children and relatives for the burial programme booklet and banners in honour of Chief Iwara. This expresses how painful and shocking the exit of their beloved father was to them. But for daddy, he was ready, he was prepared and he knew the end was close. Five days before his earthly departure, he handed over a two-page handwritten script of his autobiography to his first son, Mr. Iwara Usani Iwara, with the words: "I do not want my story told by someone else".

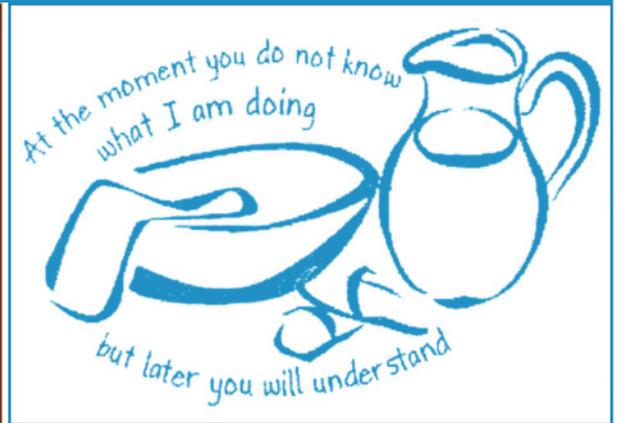
Daddy *Acid* lived a happy and fulfilled life. He was a community man, and for his outstanding and leadership

qualities, he became and remained a village head in his native Egbizum, Ugep till death. At the Christian wake keep on Friday 22, his immediate family, relatives and friends, Catholic community, Egbizum and Ikom communities gathered around his coffin to pray for his happy repose with mixed feelings. This was followed by various native songs, drumming and dancing steps.

Funeral Mass was celebrated for him on Saturday 23 June at Holy Cross Catholic Church, Ugep. His remains were laid to rest at his residence in Egbizum, Ikpakapit amidst tears of loss and joy for a good and exemplary life lived.

Pa Stephen Usani Iwara was a great man, a known devotee of the Divine Mercy, a lover of lawn tennis, a dancer and an amazing, self-taught guitarist. He was described as a man who had a heart of gold, who let his milk of kindness touched people. Wherever there was discord and anger threatening, he was always there to preach peace and to calm nerves. May his gentle soul rest in peace, amen.

Deepening GC 2015 Calls



GRIGNY*

The biblical message at the last supper is an everyday invitation to humility and service even in what seem INSIGNIFICANT MINISTRIES. Today we are invited to ask ourselves who are the vulnerable among us who have neither voice nor choice in the milieu where we live and minister today? Our mission calls us to endeavour to embody these core values of respect, justice, commitment, compassion and integrity in all that we do. Wherever we are sent, whatever we do we are on mission for Christ, so whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:30).

To be concrete, Sr Mary Ogunjobi a stagiaire (learner) in two different centers in high populated immigrants' city of Grigny, her joy to learn and commitment to the programs in the two centers are sources of encouragement to her mates. Her instructors now rely on her to motivate and encourage those who are dragging their feet in a way contributing in empowering them. In the same vein, Sr Cecilia Uzodike accompanies two people a retired judge and medical secretary who come to the community every month to deepen their spiritual life through the Gospels and writings of a Mystic soeur Marie de la Trinite, they call this experience OASIS in the fast busy and materialistic French society.

GIDAN MARIYA

We are called to continue the mission of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is that of bringing good news to the poor, proclaiming liberty to captives and restoring new sight to the blind, freeing the oppressed and announcing the year of mercy (cf. Luke 4: 18-19)

Each one of us is called to a specific vocation or mission in life. "Come follow me", Jesus said, "I will make you fishers of men" (Matt. 4: 19). The requirements for going on mission are so great, so real that sometimes they sound almost harsh. "Whoever wishes to be a follower of mine must deny herself, take up her cross each day, and follow in my steps," the Master said



IMAGE SOURCE: <https://www.japantimes.co.jp>

Fulani herdsmen can't stop us...
No amount of killing or attacks will make us forsake our faith or Christianity, for in God we put our trust.

(Matt.16:24). What does this unending invitation means for us as religious on mission? As women who have been clearly chosen and have made life choices for the kingdom, we too must invite others to embrace the kingdom.

Mission must continue even in difficult situations. "Fulani herdsmen can't stop us" is the phrase that sums up our experience of mission in southern part of Kaduna. This expression comes out of us naturally to underline our determination to continue to serve God in the local church despite the persecution and killings. No amount of killing or attacks will make us forsake our faith or Christianity, for in God we put our trust. In the face of challenges and difficulties we must continue to encourage one another in making the mission easy for ourselves.

* GRIGNY's article was inadvertently published as ETAMPES' in May. We have, therefore, made the correction here; our apologies.

*Pray for Jos,
Benue, Taraba,
Kaduna, Borno ...
Pray for Nigeria*



**PRESS STATEMENT OF MOST
REV. IGNATIUS KAIGAMA,
ARCHBISHOP OF JOS AFTER
THE RECENT JOS KILLINGS**

I am very far from Nigeria but the sad and bad news from Plateau State are not far from me. I hear that herdsmen are on the prowl again and there is bloodshed, murder of infants, youths, men and women in huge numbers in our beloved land of “peace and tourism”. The flagrant and despicable taking of human lives and the continued destruction to homes and means of livelihood is a disgrace to humanity and a shameful projection of a negative image of Nigerians.

The gruesome murders have robbed me of the enthusiasm, energy and pride with which I came to Canada and America. I came boasting to the various audiences I had — whether in Church prayer gatherings or discussion groups, at media interviews or during interactions with officials of Foreign Affairs Ministry — about the huge potentials in Nigeria and how even in the midst of violence caused either by Boko Haram, militant herdsmen or the yet to be identified “foreign invaders”, peace is very possible as we are determined to sustain the culture of civilized conduct and peace. I declared emphatically that I am proud of being a Nigerian and cannot apologize for that conviction. I have talked to hundreds of people in Canada and the United States of America, assuring them that Nigerians are a hard working, religious, resilient and peaceful people. I told my friends who have been postponing their visit to Nigeria for ten years now due to security issues not to be afraid. I told them to “come and see”. Last year I hosted visitors from 12 countries from South America, Asia and Europe and they all returned home safely after visiting Jos and even Maiduguri. I therefore renewed my invitation to my friends to come to Jos and they will experience that the

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An Elegy for Jos

— ‘Pelumi O’Dunsin

**I stand on the rocky plane
Of Plateau this morning...
The blood-mashed ash-dust
Of your pillaged fields
Hits my eyes, leaving me in tears**

**You were once beautiful, Plateau!
Full of life — Why are your assailants
So unbridled like Harmattan,
Heartlessly leaking up all your mirth?**

**Once, your façade was a spectacle
Of the dancing grass —
I saw them dance, I joined in the dance...
(Grass dance is mystic;
The wind is their music
And space, the hide of their drums)
I joined in their song
A multiple of tongues
Before this noisy silence
F- f- f-, fell...**

**They plundered the grass
And cut the sheaves
To make hay of them
For some savage cattle
And mashed the pulp
To drink the future dim!**

**Now, as I bow mournfully
Musing the wisdom of roots
I can hear the hushed
Chorus of the roots —
The grass is never dying
The roots will sprout again
After this ravaging drought**

An adaptation from ***A Dance in the Grass***, a collection of poems published in 2007 in celebration of Plateau State, Nigeria, by the same author.

ARCHBISHOP IGNATIUS KAIGAMA'S PRESS STATEMENT ON JOS KILLINGS —continued from page 9

people are a kind-hearted, loving and peaceful people and not what they read in exaggerated media reports.

While I am still here making frantic positive propaganda for my country Nigeria, inhuman and diabolical killings have taken place in parts of Plateau State. What do I tell the friends I have convinced to come, the youths I interacted with telling them how beautiful Nigeria is? What of the messages of hope about Nigeria that I gave in Vancouver, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, New York, Portsmouth, Milwaukee, etc, telling everyone about the goodness of my beloved country? Was I lying? Why should I be confronted with such embarrassing news while I am still on "active duty" here as an unrecognised and unappreciated ambassador for Nigeria — a duty I have performed selflessly in many parts of the world for over two decades now. Wherever I find myself I try to promote the positive image of our dear country; of course, not neglecting it's dark sides.

While I am out here, people are still asking me questions about the Chibok girls, the Dapchi girls, especially of Leah. They ask me what they hear about the murderous terrorists called *herdsmen* who kill priests and lay faithful at worship or defenceless people on the farms. They join me in worrying that these murderous agents don't seem to have in sight the end of their massive destruction to lives and property.

In the course of my journey I have also met with government officials and tried to put up strong arguments about why there is violence and destruction in our land, blaming corruption, poverty and bad governance and begging them (officials abroad) to genuinely intervene to speed our socio-economic progress. Now, with this indescribable wickedness of killers in Plateau State and other parts of the Middle Belt where the poison of extreme violence is emitted intermittently from the wells of their evil hearts, meant

to cause monumental loss to lives and property, is there still justification in telling the "good news" about Nigeria?

I have shared the story of multidimensional peace efforts in Nigeria, using our Dialogue Reconciliation and Peace (DREP) Centre in Jos as an example. DREP is an initiative of the Catholic Archdiocese of Jos meant to offer a neutral place where reconciliation of aggrieved parties takes place. The same goes for the Interfaith Vocational Training Centre in Bokkos near Barkin Ladi, where Muslim youths and Christian youths are trained for two years in vocational skills and helped to appreciate the civilized culture of dialogue instead of hostile confrontation at the slightest feeling of provocation. I explained how shortly before I left Nigeria we were at meetings in DREP Centre in Jos with the Fulani and Irigwe ethnic groups to strategize on how to avert further killings. We even agreed to hold an interfaith prayer session in August.

Today, when I heard that the killings have resumed, I called His Excellency, Governor Simon Lalong and my Vicar General Msgr. Cletus Gotan, who both kindly explained the pathetic situation to me, and all of them felt so flabbergasted at the turn of events by the gruesome murders.

Could our President come out clearly, categorically and courageously to explain to his kinsmen why dialogue is the best solution. Cattle, as important as they are, cannot be valued over human beings. That does not mean that cows should be wounded, stolen or killed. I believe not enough has been done to challenge the herdsmen killings. Is it because of the so-called "hidden agenda" or simply the absence of courage, determination, patriotism and political will? The Igbos who merely attempted secession were brutalized and suppressed. Who will suppress these raging evil killers? *Quod erat demonstrandum.*



3rd	Sr. Eugenia Raymond	Birthday	22nd	Sr. MaryAnn Anaehobi	Birthday
4th	Sr. Faith Ehiosu	Birthday	22nd	Sr. Christiana Kure	Birthday
6th	Sr. Maureen Long'ep	Feastday	23rd	Sr. Bridget Shekara	Feastday
8th	Sr. Clara Azubuike	Birthday	23rd	Sr. Bridget Agum	Feastday
14th	Sr. Judith Jatau	Birthday	23rd	Sr. Bridget Nwankwo	Feastday
15th	Sr. Christiana Arokoyo	Birthday	26th	Sr. Ann Amadi	Feastday
15th	Sr. Gladys Ekhareafu	Birthday	26th	Sr. Anna Obada	Feastday

Heart of the MATTER

by Rita Akin-Otiko, SSL

Catching the “Moods” of Contemporary Nigeria

The word, “nostalgia” for the Nigeria of my youth best describes the feeling which envelopes me each time I read about or hear the goings on in our contemporary Nigeria. According to the online Collins dictionary, “The mood of a place is the general impression that you get of it”. Other words for “mood” include feel, spirit, atmosphere and feeling. Like any other nation, Nigeria has its own variety of prevalent and subtle moods. I was born in the early 1960s. So up to the 1980s, or dare I include the 1990s, Nigeria was relatively peaceful, modest and happy in many ways. Unfortunately, today, it is an entirely different ball game that is played out on this once graceful and gracious terrain. To where has the Nigeria of yesteryears departed or withdrawn? Can it ever be retrieved? Which way is Nigeria headed?

Nigerians have a way of making light of grave matters. Despite the mourning and lamentations because of the killings and massacres, kidnapping and maiming, corruption and coercion going on in different parts of the country, jokes about these same heartrending realities are posted via social media on a daily basis. This light-making of serious situations is an atmospheric reality in Nigeria today. If things that ought to be critically examined become a laughing matter, is there any hope of amendment? For how long will we continue to prefer laughter to sober reflection? Do we really want change? Indeed, it is those who are adversely affected who know and feel the severity of their woes.

Also, the Nigerian President’s comment about Nigerian youths being lazy during his recent visit to President Donald Trump of USA received a potpourri of reactions expressed in various ways including songs and comedy skits. The truth of the matter is that there are many honest and hardworking Nigerian youths, and there are many others who lack these attributes but who could do well if given appropriate guidance. We often celebrate and bequeath heavy financial accolades to those who participate in shows and competitions such as *Big Brother Nigeria*, beauty pageantry etc. which enhance



promiscuity and idle thinking rather than reward, applaud, encourage and develop diligence, intelligence, creativity and innovative skills among our youths. Where do we go from here? This calls for complete reformation and paradigm shift.

In addition, and most saddening, is the continuous increase in the number of Nigerians who daily migrate from the shores of Nigeria. The desperation to leave is incredible. Nothing seems too big to sacrifice in order to bolt away from the country. In my estimation, the biggest and most pathetic aspect of this fleeing experience is its adverse effect on family life. Many desperate migrants engage in what is called, “*Arrangee* marriage” – arranged marriage between an illegal migrant and a citizen of a host country in order for the illegal migrant to acquire citizenship. This act defies faith or previous marital commitment. What can be done to make Nigeria become once again, a safe and highly desirable place to live, work and raise a family?

Furthermore, examination malpractice has taken a brazen turn in Nigeria. There are websites that sell examination questions well ahead of time. This is particularly disheartening because these sites are readily accessible, and our youths are extremely vulnerable. One wonders what is being done to quench this malevolence before it succeeds in crumbling the fragile ego of hardworking students and teachers.

Finally, when I hear and read about Nigerians performing feats in foreign lands, I feel happy, but then, why not on Nigerian soil? The response ranges from lack of equal accessibility to basic amenities to failed governance and leadership. The middle class is gradually becoming non-existent. It is either one has, or one hasn’t. In the midst of this widening gap is the aberration of extravagance and wastefulness in the name of celebrations e.g. car-washing, wedding, baby christening, graduations, etc. In spite of all these various Nigerian moods, my own mood remains optimism, for when there is life, there is hope. I love my country, *I no go lie* (I will not lie.)



The Peace-Pipe

— Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



"O my children! my poor children!
Listen to the words of wisdom,
Listen to the words of warning,
From the lips of the Great Spirit,
From the Master of Life, who made you!

"I have given you lands to hunt in,
I have given you streams to fish in,
I have given you bear and bison,
I have given you roe and reindeer,
I have given you brant and beaver,
Filled the marshes full of wild-fowl,
Filled the rivers full of fishes:
Why then are you not contented?
Why then will you hunt each other?
"I am weary of your quarrels,
Weary of your wars and bloodshed,
Weary of your prayers for vengeance,
Of your wranglings and dissensions;
All your strength is in your union,
All your danger is in discord;
Therefore be at peace henceforward,
And as brothers live together.

Contact

EDITORIAL

How Long, Lord?



Dear Family,

In these times of sorrow and grief caused by war, terrorism and senseless waste of life, we find peace in the word of God:

In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. (Isaiah 2:2-5)

I believe the day shall come. But perhaps, like me, you are asking: "How long, Lord?" May the Lord God give us peace in every land till His kingdom is established on earth. We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Utmost thanks to you all for the tremendous support we received in preparing this issue. Enjoy your reading!

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« Word to Live By »

*My life
is my
message.*

—Mahatma
Gandhi



CORPORATE EMAIL

The Communications Office now has a corporate email, sslcomm.ng@gmail.com. Expect to get *Contact* and updates via the mail address regularly. Write to us too.