

Contact



Newsletter of Sisters of St. Louis, Nigeria Province



■ BACK ROW, L-R: Sr Isabel Mann (Provincial Leader), Sr Christie Udebor, Sr Francisca Ola, Most Rev. Emmanuel Adetoyese Badejo (Bishop of Oyo Diocese), Sr Cecilia Olusanya, Most Rev. Francis Alonge Bishope (Emeritus of Ondo Diocese) and Sr Winifred Ojo (Institute Leader)
 FRONT ROW, L-R: Sr Christie Kure, Sr Clara Azubuike, Sr Lois Moses, Sr Vivian Ajuonuma, Most Rev. Jude Arogundade (Bishop of Ondo Diocese), Most Rev. Dr Gabriel Ojeleke Abegurin (Bishop of Ibadan Archdiocese), Sr Mary Godwin, Sr Roseline Fatoba and Fr. Victor Ibiyem after the anniversary Mass in Akure

In this issue:

- SSL 70th Anniversary: A 3-Fold Celebration
- Appreciation
- A Miseen Cara Workshop
- Akure Zone Associates Renew their Commitment
- Mission Sunday
- Mission for Life
- Heart of the Matter
- Roots

SSL 70th Anniversary: A 3-Fold Celebration

By 'Pelumi O'Dunsin, Ibadan

Monday 15 October 2018, on the feast of St. Theresa of Avila and Mère Thérèse de La Croix (first Mother General of the SSL) and the death anniversary of Abbé Eugene-Marie Louis Bautain (founder of the SSL), the city of Akure lit up with the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the presence of the Sisters of St. Louis in Nigeria. The occasion was more conspicuous because it happened on a Monday, when ordinarily, people would be dashing to work. Arguably, what more auspicious day to mark a milestone in serving in a "broken and divided

— continued on page 2

[Contact Newsletter](#)

3-FOLD CELEBRATION —continued from page 1

world” fulfilling Abbé Louis Bautain’s vision of “a world healed, unified and transformed; bringing Christ to all, and all to Christ”?

The Thanksgiving Mass, which began at 10 am at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Akure, was tagged “Eucharistic Celebration of God’s Faithfulness”. It was a medley of celebrations. Four sisters: Vivian Ifeyinwa Ajuonuma, Roseline Kehinde Fatoba, Lois Zigwai Moses and Mary Uwane Godwin made their final profession of vows at the Mass. Also, five sisters: Clara Azubuike, Christie Kure, Franca Ola, Cecilia Olusanya and Christie Udebor marked 25 years of religious profession with renewal of vows. It was both solemn and emotional to see Christie Kure, Mistress of Temporary Professed sisters presenting candidates for final profession while making a renewal of her vows at 25th anniversary during the same Mass. Sr Winifred Ojo, Institute Leader of the SSL witnessed and assented to the vows of the sisters on behalf of the Institute. All the Sisters of St Louis present were adorned in sparkling white. In

addition, those who were not making vows wore a blue scarf with St Louis family logo print to match. There were male and female religious from other congregations too in attendance. Friends and Associates of St Louis, the biological families of the professing sisters, old and present St Louis schools students as well as parishioners and well-wishers graced the occasion in their numbers. Six bishops and many priests from various dioceses (including the Republic of Benin) where the SSL live and work were in attendance too to celebrate the Mass.

Before the homily, Sr Catherine Ologunagaba led a dramatic narration of the SSL journey (which was met with a thunderous applause by the congregation) beginning from France 174 years ago through the various regions and provinces to Nigeria. The homilist, Most Rev. Jude Arogundade, Bishop of Akure Diocese, observed that human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable, progress and growth demand decisive steps and hard work. He eulogised the pioneer Sisters of St. Louis for their vision,

fidelity and sacrifice in bestowing to Nigeria the St Louis tradition which has now become a household name in Nigeria and in particular, Ondo diocese. He was full of thanks also for the present generation of SSL for their chastity, dignity and selflessness. He concluded his speech by borrowing a phrase from the Bishop Emeritus of Ondo diocese, Bishop Alonge, saying sisters, “What can I do without you?”

The reception of guests took place at St Louis Nursery and Primary School, Akure. The Friends and Associates were actively present. Sr Margaret Yusufu gave a vocational promotion speech and encouraged young girls to join the St Louis Sisters. Guests enjoyed a potpourri of scintillating performances from St Louis school pupils and entertainers at the reception, amidst dining, cutting of cakes, gifts presentation and speeches. The event of the day was concluded by a gala night, exclusively for the sisters, at St Louis Novitiate, Akure. Glory to God for his faithfulness! Long live SSL, Nigeria Province!

MORE PHOTOS OF THE EVENT — Log on to <www.stlouissisters.org> for more photos and stories of the anniversary celebration



Sisters Isabel Mann and Winifred Ojo with the 70th anniversary cake



The finally professed Sisters singing at the Mass



PLT members with 2018 set of Silver Jubilarians



Sisters on the dance floor with Novitiate dance troupe

19 October 2018

APPRECIATION

Dear Associates and Friends,

With a deep sense of gratitude and appreciation, we write to thank everyone of you very sincerely from the depth of our hearts, for your prayers and good wishes that accompanied us during the preparation and celebration of our final profession of vows, silver jubilee and of course the 70th anniversary celebration of SSL presence in Nigeria. The three-in-one celebration was a huge success, thanks be to God, and thanks for your prayers and support.

We are indeed very grateful to those of you who were personally present at the celebration, those who could not come but wrote, made phone calls and sent gifts to us, as well as every other person whose wishes were so deep that words could not express, but the Holy Spirit conveyed your thoughts of, and prayers for us. We could feel deep within us that you were all praying and holding us specially in your hearts.

There is no doubt that the joy, peace and serenity that accompanied the celebration was as a result of so many prayers from all of you. We are very grateful and pray that abundant blessings will be poured upon each one of you according to God's riches in glory. We also pray that the Spirit of *Sint Unum* will permeate our whole being and inspire us as an institute to fulfil our vision to bring about *a world healed, unified and transformed*.

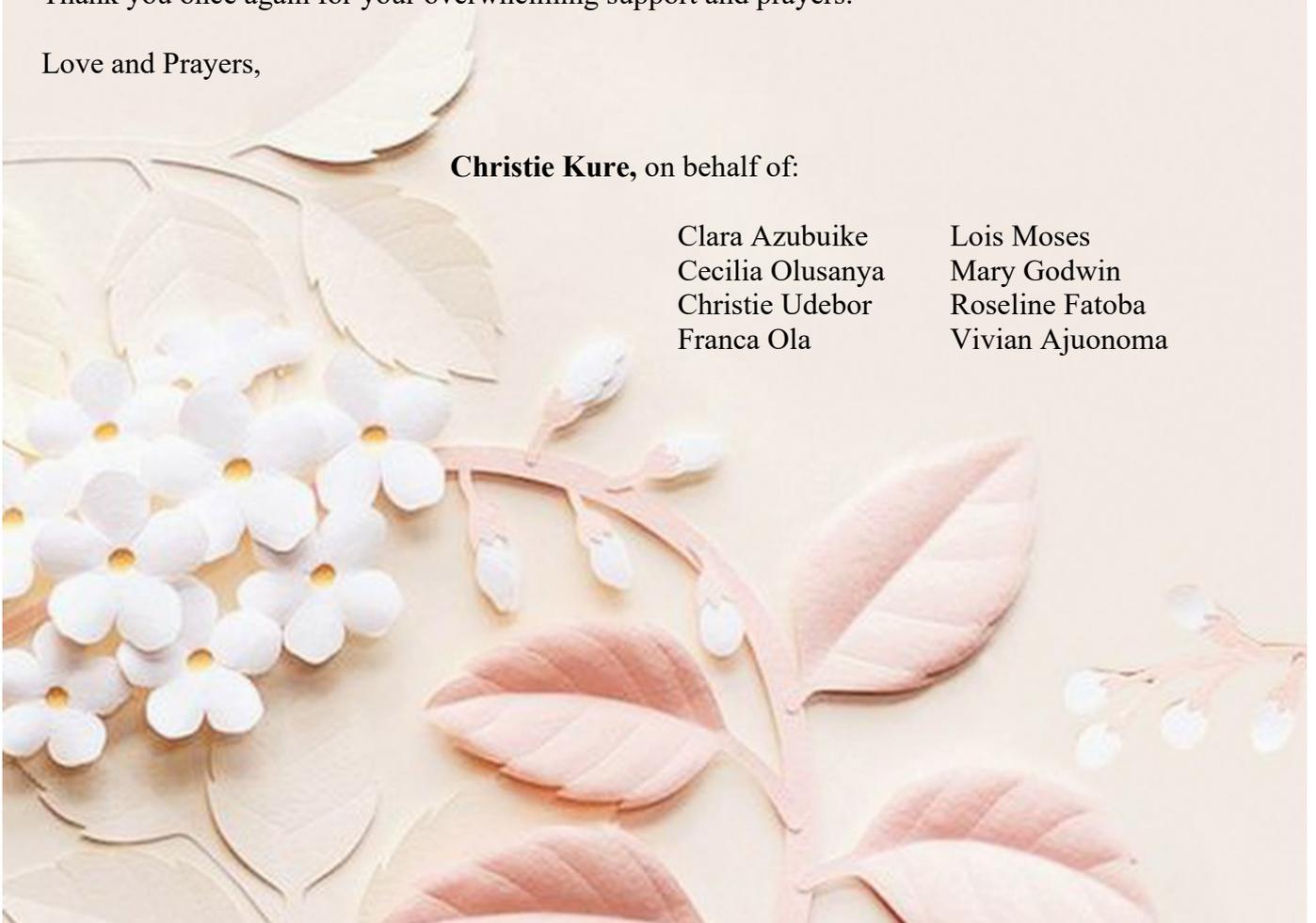
Thank you once again for your overwhelming support and prayers.

Love and Prayers,

Christie Kure, on behalf of:

Clara Azubuike
Cecilia Olusanya
Christie Udebor
Franca Ola

Lois Moses
Mary Godwin
Roseline Fatoba
Vivian Ajuonoma





Sisters Theresa Peter Seyin (fourth from the right) and Anna Obada (first from the right) with other participants at the workshop

REPORT OF A MISEAN CARA WORKSHOP ATTENDED BY SISTERS ANNA OBADA AND THERESA PETER SHEYIN HELD IN LAGOS FROM 26TH-28TH AUGUST 2018

By Theresa Peter Sheyin SSL

Misean Cara is an international and Irish faith-based missionary movement working with some of the most marginalised and vulnerable communities in developing countries. The workshop was organized in order to refresh, equip, empower and also remind the participants on how to implement Misean Cara's strategic plan of 2017-2021, which is to:

- Uphold the right to quality education
- Uphold the right to better health, clean water and sanitation
- Uphold the right to sustainable livelihoods
- Uphold and advocate for human rights
- Enhance and promote the missionary approach to development

The participants were drawn from various congregations including Dominican Sisters from Gusau, Daughters of the Holy Spirit, Daughters of Charity, Franciscan Sisters, Sisters of St Louis, Discalced Carmelite and Presentation Brothers. Referred to as a "mentor", the representative of Misean Cara in West Africa, Mr Michael Osei Nkrumah welcomed the participants. He reiterated that Misean Cara would remain steadfast in its support for the marginalised and vulnerable through the untiring efforts of the church because that is where true and authentic service is found. He urged us to be good representatives of our different congregations by adhering to what Misean Cara wants

from the various projects we engage in. To avoid being blacklisted, he pleaded that any change that must be made after a contract is signed should be communicated to them.

The good work of liberation that the priests and sisters carry out needs to be told to the whole world, so the civil society was specially invited to the workshop to give an input. The Civil Society Action Coalition On Education For All (CSACEFA) is a coalition of different NGOs, CBOs, and FBOs who came together to work on education issues in Nigeria. CSACEFA operates a national, state and zonal structure. Some of its aims and objectives are:

- To contribute to the shaping of policies on education in Nigeria
- To facilitate the implementation of education goals and agendas at the national and global level through partnership building
- To provide a platform for monitoring, evaluating, reviewing and implementation of all education goals and projects.

After we had listened to group and considered its presentation, Mr Michael encouraged all congregations to register with this body in order to have a strong voice when addressing issues to the government, traditional and religious leaders, youths and other organizational bodies.

The second presentation was done by a Daughter of Charity, Sr Ngozi Aluka. She talked on INCLUSIVE EDUCATION, a system which welcomes physically challenged children and places them side by side their other counterparts in the same learning environment. She stressed the importance of giving children with disabilities equal opportunity in order to function well and to have a sense of belonging. The third presentation was done by the Franciscans on CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND PROTECTION. In her own presentation, Sister Anna Obada SSL emphasized records taking and keeping in all our apostolates, especially in our schools. She stressed the need to educate teachers, parents and all stakeholders on child protection because there is still a huge misunderstanding about the concept.

The ambassador of Ireland to Nigerian, who was ably represented by Mr Joseph, praised the various ways by which the religious work tirelessly to dignify and honour the human person. He urged us to keep up the good work and praised religious congregations for always staying back to identity and cater for the people during difficult times especially those working in northern Nigeria. He informed us that the doors of the embassy will always be open to all religious in need of assistance.

At the end of the workshop, Mr Michael informed us that Misean Cara's fund is beginning to dwindle because of the many projects on ground, therefore, congregations should begin to look for ways of sustaining existing projects in order to be self reliant, and Misean Cara is ready to support such projects. The workshop was insightful, very interactive and superb!

Akure Zone Associates Renew their Commitment



The Associates during one of their sessions (Sister Cecilia Lengpang appears far left)



The Associates with Fr Nathaniel Agbo

By Perpetua Aghghovia SSL

Twelve active members renewed their commitment at the annual retreat for the Akure Zone Associates held from 28 to 30 September 2018 in Akure. It was also a period to pray for Mrs

Ndudi who had been ill. New officers were elected to stir the affairs of the body for the next two years. They are Mrs Udorah (President), Mrs Oloye (Secretary/PRO), Mrs Aladejana (Financial Secretary) and

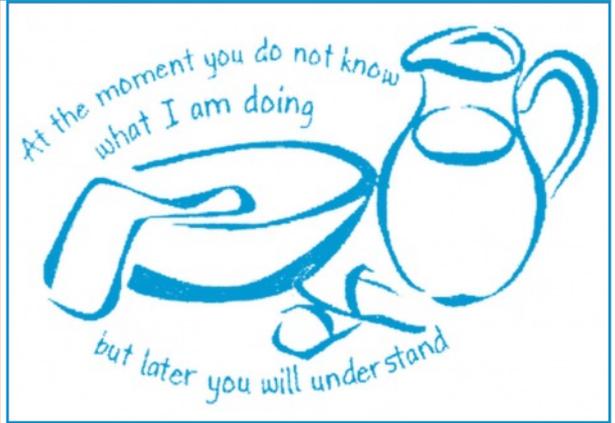
Mrs Faluru (Treasurer). Sister Veronica Odida was present to represent Sister Bridget Agum. On invitation, Sister Cecilia Lengpang and Sister Helen Orunkoya handled the election procedures.

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*, Novitiatē* & Zonkwā*	December 2018	

WE would like to remind the asterisked communities to please send in their contributions without further delay.

Deepening GC 2015 Calls



IKERE

Mission is giving and surrendering of oneself for the service of God in humanity. It involves the willingness to serve and be opened to learning new things.

We as Sisters of St. Louis respond to Mission for Life by identifying and rendering help to those we come in contact with irrespective of religion, colour and tribe, especially the weak and the vulnerable at all levels. Mission behoves us to be responsive to the needs and call of our time in order to realise the vision of our founder of "a world healed, unified and transformed."

Ways to Respond to the Needs of Our Time include:

- Positive attitude to any responsibility given by the Province/Institute irrespective of where and when.
- Active participation in any apostolate we find ourselves.
- Standing for justice and peace in our apostolate and in the society.
- Empowering people to carry on the mission of Christ.

The chapter call invites us to deepen our commitment and to make ourselves available to the needs of the Institute at this time.

KOLAPO-ISHOLA

Mission is an important goal or purpose that is accompanied with strong conviction, a calling or vocation. It requires sending or being sent for some duty or purpose. Mission involves bringing about positive contribution and making a difference in the lives of those in the world.

Mission of Christ brought about reconciliation between the Father and us, leading to the salvation of souls through His death on the cross. This He accomplished by: preaching, healing, converting, living exemplary life and drawing people to the Father.

As His father sent Him, so we are also called out of the world to minister to the world. In all, Jesus did the will of the One that sent Him. The summary of Jesus' mission is that He did the will of the Father till the end. As Christians and women that have taken the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, and also as Sisters of St. Louis, we too have been called to do the will of the Father till the end, in our apostolates and community living (day to day).

As we mark our platinum presence as Sisters of St. Louis in Nigeria, we are encouraged to continue in the spirit of "Sint Unum" to make a difference in our world, that is full of various challenges.



NOVEMBER		
6th	Sr. Christiana Adeforiti	Birthday
10th	Sr. Louise Eziechi	Birthday
11th	Sr. Mary Ogunjobi	Birthday
16th	Sr. Gertrude Elelegu	Feastday
16th	Sr. Susana Gertrude Didam	Feastday
17th	Sr. Elizabeth Ogedengbe	Feastday
22nd	Sr. Cecilia Lengpang	Feastday
22nd	Sr. Cecilia Olusanya	Feastday
22nd	Sr. Cecilia Uzodike	Feastday
25th	Sr. Ijanada Emmanuel	Birthday



SSL, postulants and novices at the event in a group photograph with the 70th anniversary cake

When I received the invitation to the celebrations coming up in our Province on Monday, 15 October 2018, weeks before, it evoked in me quite a few multi-layered feelings. Two of those feelings lingered on, refusing to either lessen in magnitude or decrease in intensity. They fluidly pirouette around in my heart each time I ruminated with nostalgia the upcoming events back home in Nigeria.

The first was a profound feeling of joy, bothering on ecstasy, as Sint Unum would be evinced in our coming together for the triple celebration of major landmarks in our life as a Province — Final profession of our Sisters, Silver jubilee of our Sisters and 70th Anniversary of our Province. It would hopefully bring together different people connected to us from different corners of the country and perhaps outside too. The triple celebration brought to mind one of David's songs — Psalm 133:

"1. How good and how pleasant it is when brothers [sisters] dwell [celebrate] together as one! 2. Like fine oil on the head, running down upon the beard, upon the beard of Aaron, upon the collar of his robe. 3. Like dew of Hermon coming down upon the mountains of Zion. There the LORD has decreed a blessing, life for evermore!"

Heart of the MATTER

by Rita Akin-Otiko, SSL

Monday, 15 October 2018: Sint Unum and the Realities of Contemporary Nigeria

The triple celebration was indeed the LORD's doing! It was a marvel in our eyes!

The second lingering feeling was that of relief. I was relieved that the three ceremonies were taking place in one day, at the same venue and in a low-keyed fashion in consonance with the sober and modest realities of our hard times in our contemporary Nigeria. The decision and choice to keep the celebration simple was in keeping with our call to be in solidarity with the poor, a core call which is lucidly expressed in our Institute and Province Mission Statements and core values. Sensitivity to our environment especially when there are so many people who are hurting and lacking in basic necessities is in itself a Gospel value, a Christian witness.

I could not but think back to our forebears who in their life time were sensitive to and responded to the needs

of their time. 70 years ago, when in Nigeria there was need for the girl-child to be educated, Mother Columbanus responded to this need by sending Sisters from Ireland to help in the intellectual emancipation and development of the girl-child. Responding to the needs of that time birthed the presence and work of the Sisters of St. Louis in Nigeria Province. Through their presence and mission in Nigeria, many of us have been able to fulfil our call to Religious life. Many others are still contemplating it. This unique call some of us celebrated in final commitment to the LORD, some

others among us commemorated 25 years of their first commitment, and the entire Province celebrated our 70 years of being together as a family. Indeed, the triple celebration was the LORD's doing! It was a marvel in our eyes!

Monday, 15 October 2018 from all I have heard and read is a day to be remembered in the history of the Sisters of St. Louis, Nigeria Province!

Congratulations to the saintly Sisters of St. Louis who came on mission to Nigeria!

*Congratulations to our beloved Sisters making their final profession of vows!
Congratulations to our dear Silver Jubiliarians!*

*Congratulations to all of us Sisters of St. Louis, Nigeria Province!
Congratulations to the entire St. Louis Family!*



Telling Our Story

(to a slow folk song)

*Alo o! Alo o!**

Alo o! Alo o!

My *alo*, my story is

A big chunk

Of 70 mouthful years

You'll eat all day long

My *alo* happens on

The Sœurs de Saint-Louis

Who have French and Irish roots

With African branches....

Oh! I feel the excitement

A hungry soul feels

At the sight of a favourite dish

My *alo* is an all day long affair

As we reminiscent growth and progress

My *alo* continues on

The chosen dames,

Holy wayfarers who arrived in Nigeria in 1948

Bearing touches to bless

The future in spite of all odds

Trudging on,

The beloved dames of St. Louis

Would make choices, take decisions

Acting on changes, in seasons and times of life

Planting milestones

At junctions on their way

Chew on the chunks

Slowly — savour the flavour

I told you

My *alo* is a big 70-piece chunk

Of mouthful years

You'll eat all day long

They would blaze paths

Stump roots and labyrinths

Pioneer missions and

Congregate where

Their mates flocked

They took giant, monumental strides

Walking slowly but surely

Plating seeds and hoping

These 70 years

For like Paul the great Apostle,

They were “sure of this, that

He who began a good work

In us will bring it to completion

at the day of Jesus Christ”.

**Alo* — a tale

This piece is an adaptation of an original presentation by Mokola (Ibadan) SSL community on “Telling Our Story” in July 2016

Contact

EDITORIAL

Roots



Dear Family,

The Scripture in Proverbs 22:28 is very instructive. “Do not remove the ancient landmark which your [forebears] have set”, it says. The same charge was reiterated on Monday, 15 October 2018 on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of SSL presence in Nigeria. First it came from the homilist, Most Rev. Jude Arogundade, Bishop of Ondo Diocese during Mass. Later, in a remark at the gala night held at the Novitiate to round off the celebration, Provincial Leader, Sr Isabel Mann urged the Sisters not to lose the values they have inherited. A people's roots are their identity, there is no gainsaying about that.

Being rooted in one's origins is a major impetus for growth and exploits. So I pray for you dear Sisters, using Paul the Apostle's words in Ephesians 3: 16-19, “May you be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner [being], that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being **rooted** and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge ...”.

Please enjoy this compact, combined issue of *Contact* as we continue to bask in the effusion of the Platinum Jubilee of St. Louis tradition in Nigeria. God bless you all.

Pelumi O'Dunsin



'Pelumi O'Dunsin,
Chief Editor

pelumi.dunsin@yahoo.com
+234 (0)706 204 7492



Antonia Eneanya SSL
Assistant Chief Editor

toniauc@yahoo.com
+234 (0)703 792 9969

« Word to Live By »

A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots.

—Marcus Garvey



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.