



Contact

Newsletter of Sisters of St. Louis, Nigeria Province



FULL TEXT OF THE BRIEF ADDRESS DELIVERED BY SR. CHRISTIE KURE, PROVINCIAL LEADER (2019 - 2023) ON THE OCCASION OF PLT HANDOVER CEREMONY, 25TH AUGUST 2019



ABOVE: The symbolic handing over at the Provincialate chapel on Sunday 25 August 2019
BELOW: Sr Christie kure reading her address on the occasion

“Life is a journey, an unavoidable journey that takes us to places we love, hate, or wish for something totally different. Every journey has a beginning and an end.”

Our dear Sisters Isabel, Bridget, Maria and Josephine — today you are witnessing and celebrating the end of a journey you started exactly four years ago, and yet, this marks the beginning of another journey for each of you. Life is taking you on a new journey, a new path; stepping out with you into a future unknown to you but well known to God who has been your faithful companion on the journey until you become united with Him at the end of this life’s journey.

We, Sisters of St. Louis, Nigeria Province are grateful to you for the four years of hard work and sacrifices made to bring the Province to where it is today. We are grateful:

- For the times you kept silent, despite the urge to defend yourselves, when you were criticised and blamed for certain leadership roles you have played;

- For the times you made sacrifices without receiving any thanks or acknowledgements, without even feeling any inward satisfaction;
- For the times you did things or took difficult decisions on behalf of, and for the good of the Province/Institute, knowing that you must bear sole responsibility for your decisions without being able to explain it to anyone;
- For the many times you kept awake at night trying to meet deadlines and pondering on how best to be of service to your Sisters and to the mission of Christ.

For all these and many other things you have done for us and on our behalf, we are indeed very grateful.

May an abundance of gratitude fill your hearts as you reflect upon the years of leadership through which you touched many lives. May you discover a store of hidden wisdom among the people and events that have brought you challenges and pains. And may the God of our journey be your guide for each step that you may take from today.

And for us who are taking up this responsibility of leadership in the Province today, let us rely on these encouraging words from Deuteronomy 31:7-8, where Moses summoned Joshua in the presence of all Israel and said to him, ***“Be strong, stand firm; you are the one who will lead these people to occupy the land that the Lord swore to their fathers he would give them. The Lord Himself will lead you; He will be with you; He will not fail you or abandon you. Have no fear, do not be disheartened by anything”***.

Yes, we are the ones being called to lead the Sisters at this particular time to where God is leading the Province in the next four years. Today as we begin this

journey, let us stand on God’s promises that will never fail. The Lord Himself will lead our Province. Before us is the most wonderful and glorious future which at the moment remains unseen, but the journey of faith will lead us there.

So, in our journeying with God, let us never lose our sense of direction, never lose sight of the landmarks towards which we travel. And should cloud or rain obscure our vision, may we fix our eyes on God, so that our feet may tread in His footsteps, His Word be our encouragement, and His love our protection against the storms that may rise against us.

We are grateful to all of you, our Sisters, Friends, Associates, and collaborators, especially those of you who are here with us to celebrate this special day in the life of our Province and Institute. Your presence here today is a visible sign of your appreciation of what the outgoing PLT has done and a strong commitment to support the incoming PLT. We thank you for trusting us with leadership responsibility of this Province and we have no doubt that you will support us all the way, so that together we may move the Province in the FIVE FUTURE DIRECTIONS that God is leading us in the next four years.

As we celebrate with joy the feast of our Patron St. Louis, let us pray that through his intercession, we may like him, become women and men of the Eucharist, finding in the Holy Eucharist the grace to live every moment of our lives in and with Christ for the glory of God and for the good of our neighbours, especially our poor, sick and marginalized neighbours in whose service St. Louis devoted his life and resources.

THANK YOU AND HAPPY FEAST TO US ALL!

— **Christie Kure, ssl**



Rev. Fr. Wilfred Kouijzer blesses the old and the new PLT members



Old and new PLT (BACK ROW, L-R: Maria Ehikiyoa, Isabel Mann, Bridget Agum and Josephine FRONT ROW, L-R: Adefunke Babalola, Margaret Yusufu, Christie Kure and Victoria Orifunmise)



 L-R: Novices Celestina Issac, Immaculata Mayaki, Mary Okafor and Josephine Ojo.

INTERVIEW WITH THE NEWLY RECEIVED NOVICES

— Joan Samuel and Linda Christopher (Novices)

August 15 is an important day for Catholic faithful all over the world as it is the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This year, some temporary Sisters of St. Louis (Nigeria and Ghana), renewed their vows in Akure on that day. We also thanked God for the lives of the newly received novices Celestina Isaac, Immaculata Mayaki, Josephine Ojo, and Mary Okafor. It was a happy day in their lives as they were received as novices into the Novitiate to discern their vocation in becoming Sisters of St. Louis.

In this report, Joan Samuel and Linda Christopher anchored a mock news and interview broadcast.

This is Abbé Bautain Radio and Television Station on 97.3 FM, Novitiate, Akure. News Headline: Interview with the newly received Novices in to Novitiate. I am Joan Samuel and here with me is Linda Christopher reporting.

Here with us is Celestina Isaac.

WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

Celestina: Kaura Local Government in Kaduna State.

WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR BEING A NOVICE?

Celestina: To be received as a Novice, to be happy and persevere to the end.

HOW DO YOU FEEL COMING TO THE NOVITIATE?

Celestina: I feel happy.

HOW DID YOU FIND THE LITURGY OF YOUR RECEPTION?

Celestina: The liturgy was okay; it was symbolic on this day of the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and I was touched with the hymn (O Mary

gentle one). It is a call to continue loving those I meet day to day.

HOW DID YOU FEEL WHEN YOU WERE ASKED TO CHANGE FROM YOUR POSTULANT DRESS TO NOVITIATE HABIT?

Celestina: I was delighted wearing the veil for the first time; it's a promotion to another level with more responsibilities.

CAN YOU TELL US HOW YOU FELT WHEN THE CONSTITUTIONS AND THE EMBLEM WERE GIVEN TO YOU?

Celestina: I felt happy that I am a full Novice in the Institute of the Sisters of St. Louis and set to study the Constitutions.

WHAT ADVICE AND ENCOURAGEMENT DID YOU RECEIVE?

Celestina: To be happy in any situation I find myself and hold on to Christ who has called me, by finding time to be with the Lord.

SO HOW DID YOU FIND THE WHOLE CELEBRATION?

Celestina: I thanked God. It went well, I am now a Novice. The celebration was beautiful, the environment was well decorated and conducive, and the food was delicious. I also appreciate the effort of the community Sisters and the Sisters that came to celebrate with us. *Dieu vous bénisse.*

Let us hear from Immaculata Eko'oyorkorze Mayaki.

WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

Mayaki: Ibillo Akoko Edo in Edo State.

WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR BEING A NOVICE?

Mayaki: To be groomed to live the Religious life as a Sister of St. Louis.



The new Novices flanked by Sisters

HOW DO YOU FEEL COMING TO THE NOVITIATE?

Mayaki: I feel happy and appreciate all those who kept me in their prayers and helped me to reach this stage of formation.

HOW DID YOU FIND THE LITURGY OF YOUR RECEPTION?

Mayaki: It was simple and inspiring.

CAN YOU TELL US HOW YOU FELT WHEN THE CONSTITUTIONS AND EMBLEM WERE GIVEN TO YOU?

Mayaki: I felt positive growth taking place. The Constitutions are to help me know more about the life, while the Emblem will continue to draw me closer to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

HOW DID YOU FEEL WHEN YOU WERE ASKED TO CHANGE FROM YOUR POSTULANT DRESS TO NOVITIATE HABIT?

Mayaki: I felt positive growth from the level I was to another level. I was so excited.

Mayaki: WHAT ADVICE OR ENCOURAGEMENT DID YOU RECEIVE?

Mayaki: To be focused and be prayerful.

HOW DID YOU FIND THE WHOLE CELEBRATION?

Mayaki: The environment was well decorated, accommodating. I am grateful to the Sisters especially the Ghanaian Sisters (Vincentia and Mary) who came to celebrate with us. I felt special.

HELLO! WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

Josephine: I am Josephine Oluwakemi Ojo.

WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

Josephine: I am from Okeayedun, Ekiti State.

WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS FOR BEING A NOVICE?

Josephine: To receive formation that will make me to become a good Religious and to be received as a Novice.

HOW DO YOU FEEL COMING TO THE NOVITIATE?

Josephine: I feel great, happy and special.

HOW DID YOU FIND THE LITURGY OF YOUR RECEPTION?

Josephine: It was simple and inspiring especially the centre piece.

HOW DID YOU FEEL WHEN YOU WERE ASKED TO CHANGE YOUR POSTULANT DRESS TO NOVITIATE HABIT?

Josephine: I was so excited, I felt like an angel or a new bride.

CAN YOU TELL US HOW YOU FELT WHEN THE CONSTITUTIONS AND EMBLEM WERE GIVEN TO YOU?



Josephine: I felt treasures were given to me to shape my life and to know more about the Congregation, and the Emblem, to connect more to our Lady.

WHAT ADVICE OR ENCOURAGEMENT DID YOU RECEIVE?

Josephine: To be prayerful, focus and always ask God for wisdom.

HOW DID YOU FIND THE WHOLE CELEBRATION?

Josephine: It was wonderful, inspiring, the decoration was beautiful and simple, the meal was nicely prepared, and the environment was conducive. I give thanks to God for the success of the celebration and making this day a reality for me. I also appreciate the Sisters who were present at the celebration.

Lastly with us here is Mary Obiamaka Okafor.

WHERE ARE YOU FROM?

Obiamaka: Idemili, Anambra State.

HOW DID YOU FEEL COMING TO THE NOVITIATE?

Obiamaka: I felt happy being given an opportunity to move into the next stage of formation; it is not my own wisdom but the grace of God.

HOW DID YOU FEEL WHEN YOU WERE ASKED TO CHANGE YOUR POSTULANT DRESS TO NOVITIATE HABIT?

Obiamaka: I was very happy, bearing in mind that more responsibilities have been given to me.

HOW DID YOU FIND THE LITURGY OF YOUR RECEPTION?

Obiamaka: The liturgy was a good one; it called for a deep reflection, a way of responding to God's call by being in touch with self and knowing Him more.

CAN YOU TELL US HOW YOU FELT WHEN THE CONSTITUTIONS AND THE EMBLEM WAS GIVEN TO YOU?

Obiamaka: I felt a deep joy. I promise to live by the Constitutions while the Emblem connects me with my mother, Mary.

WHAT ADVICE OR ENCOURAGEMENT DID YOU RECEIVE?

Obiamaka: To be focused, open to formation, be cooperative, happy and prayerful.

HOW DID YOU FIND THE WHOLE CELEBRATION?

Obiamaka: It was inspiring, memorable, simple and beautiful. I thank the Sisters for making it a success.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

With this we have come to the end of the interview.

Saint Louis Day

A WORTHWHILE CELEBRATION



 Various sights of St Louis Day celebration in Savè, Benin Republic

— Joy Pius and Ruth Tobias (Postulants)

In thanksgiving to God for a good and a remarkable event, we bring to you a report of the celebration of our Patron Saint, King Louis IX. It was our very first experience as postulants and it was worthwhile for us.

We started with Novena to Saint Louis on 16 to 24 August 2019. On 25 August the feast day, we attended Mass at the parish during which a beautiful song wishing us a happy feast day was sung by the choristers.

In the evening of the same day, a beautiful liturgy was led by Sister Rachel Ojo, SSL and Anne Omotayo, one of the postulants. In the introduction, we were told how King Louis became the Patron Saint of the Sisters of St. Louis by the inspiration of our founder Abbe Louis Bautain. Also as we began a new community year, professed Sisters were reminded of the **Words**

to Live By. It was also an awareness for us as Postulants that there are eight words to live by as Sisters of St. Louis. They are as follows:

- UT SINT UNUM (*May they be one*)
- TRUTH
- FAMILY
- LOVE
- PROVIDENCE
- CHILDLIKENESS
- SIMPLICITY
- GIVE FREELY

The songs, “St. Louis Anthem” and “We Thank You Father for the Gift of Faith” really connected us with the Sisters.

As we retired to bed that day, we thought that was the end but it was not. Saint Louis day celebration continued on Tuesday 27 August at Savè community. We left the house for Savè at about 11:30am and arrived at 1:30pm. We all were

invited to eat lunch. Those who were present were Sr Agnes Abba, Sr Kehinde Ojo, Sr Rachel Ojo, Fr Joseph OKOUNMOSOUN, Fr Nicodeme BALLE, three friends from the parish, ten postulants and Mr Moses who helps us with driving.

After eating we went to see the ongoing school project. Sr Kehinde Ojo who happened to be in charge took us round and showed us the buildings one after the other. After that we walked back to the house and played different games as a family and then we took photographs and set out on our journey back to Dassa.

Our celebration was a great privilege for many of us to know Savè, more about St. Louis and elements necessary for community living as a whole. It was a lovely celebration.

MOVING BEYOND PRECARIOUS LIVING IN NIGERIA

A Communiqué issued at the end of the Second Plenary Meeting of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) at the Divine Mercy Pastoral Centre, Agbamaya, Obada-Oko, Abeokuta, Ogun State, 11-20 September 2019.

1. PREAMBLE

We, the Catholic Bishops of Nigeria held our Second Plenary Meeting for the year at the Divine Mercy Pastoral Centre, Agbamaya, Obada-Oko, Abeokuta, Ogun State from 11-20 September 2019. Having prayerfully reflected on issues affecting the Church and the Nigerian State, we now issue this Communiqué.

2. IN COMMUNION WITH THE HOLY FATHER POPE FRANCIS

The Holy Father Pope Francis has come under attacks in recent times. Of more serious concern are the attacks coming from some higher levels of the Church in some parts of the world. As members of the Episcopal College, of which the Holy Father is the Head, we regard these attacks as the proverbial ill wind that blows no one any good, bearing in mind that there are other more legitimate and traditionally tested avenues of expressing our opinions to the Holy Father. To be able to lead the flock of Christ in the right direction in a world filled with many contradicting and confusing voices, we as a College must speak with one voice. We therefore recognise that "The Roman Pontiff, as the successor of Peter, is the perpetual and visible source and foundation of the unity both of the Bishops and of the whole company of the faithful" (Vat II, Lumen Gentium 23). We reaffirm our faith in and commitment to the Pontificate of the Holy Father Pope

Francis. Consequently, we pledge our loyalty and availability to him in the exercise of his Petrine office, and we promise to continue to cooperate with him fully in the discharge of his divine mandate as the Pastor of the Universal Church (cf. Code of Canon Law, Cann. 331, 334).

3. STATE OF THE NATION

I. Continued Insecurity and the Need for Respect for Human Life

There are, unfortunately, still many instances of killings as a result of banditry, kidnapping, assassination, armed robbery, reckless use of force by security agencies and lynching. Lately, too, there is an upsurge in the cases of suicide, even among our youths. Furthermore, the clashes between herdsmen and communities, and the activities of Boko Haram insurgents have continued, in which many innocent people lose their lives. These make living in Nigeria very precarious. We recognise the efforts being made by the government to fight insecurity in the land. However, we emphasise that a lot more still needs to be done in this regard. We pray for the peaceful repose of the victims and sympathise with the bereaved families. We reiterate that without adequate security of lives and property, there can be no stability and enabling environment for meaningful development. We

observe that the Federal Government, in which the power to control the major security agencies is vested, is overwhelmed. There is, therefore, need for proper decentralization of these agencies for effective results. We call on all citizens to be law abiding and vigilant, be one another's keeper, live by sound moral principles and, above all, obey the commandments of God. We urge governments at all levels to provide the enabling environment that would make it possible for both the government and the private sector to create job opportunities for our teeming youth population. This would certainly minimise the menace of insecurity in our land. We continue to urge the government and security agencies to do all they can to secure the immediate release of Leah Sharibu, the remaining Chibok girls and all the other persons still in captivity.

II. Necessity for National Integration

We thank God for making it possible for our country to continue to exist as a sovereign nation. Yet, much effort is required from both government and citizens in order to have a nation in which everyone and every part, irrespective of differences of tribe or religion or political affiliation, will have a sense of belonging. We note with dismay that many months after the general elections, many

6 parts of our nation are still in disarray. The country is badly divided. This is evident in appointments to positions of national importance, sharing of resources, and distribution of social amenities. We urge especially the Federal Government, to ensure that it does not allow ethnic or religious hegemony to prevail in our multi-religious and secular state. No one religion should be favoured over another. There should be fairness, justice and neutrality in relation to all religions and ethnic groups, for where there is no justice, there can be no peace, unity and development. We therefore enjoin all Nigerians to see themselves as one united people and work for justice in order to ensure a peaceful and united nation.

III. Religion, Politics and Life

We are grateful to God that in these trying times, many Nigerians remain manifestly religious. Our practice of religion, however, seems to have little effect on our moral, socio-economic and political lives. While praying for solutions to our problems, we must endeavour to be just in our dealings with others, work hard in fulfilling our duties, and collaborate with others in the social transformation of our country. We observe that our democracy is derailing from what it should be. The qualities of accountability, transparency, independence of the judiciary, respect for fundamental rights, observance of the rule of law, and fair and credible electoral process, to mention only these, are still lacking. We therefore urge all politicians, businessmen, religious leaders, public servants and indeed all citizens to live out the values of their faith for the common good. To all of us we address the challenge of our Lord Jesus Christ: "You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world" (Mt. 5: 13-14).

4. XENOPHOBIC ATTACKS IN SOUTH AFRICA

We denounce the horrendous xenophobic attacks in South Africa in which many non-nationals, including Nigerians, lost their lives and/or have their property looted and/or forced to flee the country for their dear lives. We condemn the unfortunate reprisals on perceived South African investments in some part of Nigeria, as two wrongs do not make a right! We pray for the peaceful repose of those who lost their lives and sympathise with those who have suffered bereavement, injuries and heavy losses. We commend the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC) for being prophetic in their condemnation of the attacks and urging the government to take decisive steps to end them. We join our brother Bishops in vehemently condemning the attacks and with them draw the attention of all nations to Deuteronomy 10:18: "He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing." At the same time, we note that South Africa and Nigeria have come a long way in fraternal and diplomatic relations. We advise Nigerians living at home and abroad to be good and law abiding.

5. THE SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE AND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FAMILY

Marriage, the sacred and inviolable union between one man and one woman, is under pressure throughout the world. In our country, this pressure has been increased by the economic and social crises that have lasted for several years. As a result, many a family is no longer stable enough to fulfill the traditional roles of the family in the Church and in the society. We therefore reiterate that the family, as the cradle of life and

development, needs to be helped to rediscover as well as to cherish its divine mandate as the first school of virtues and values. Parents are called upon to, by their words and examples, uphold the ideals of decency, discipline, honesty and marital fidelity. The pursuit of wealth and 'success' must be guided by those values if families are to bequeath to the wider society responsible young people, who cherish hard work and merit, who respect elders, value the sacredness of life, the sanctity of the sacrament of marriage and are willing to honestly contribute to the building of the nation and the growth of the Church. Parents are also enjoined to keep vigilance over their children and wards, in order to provide moral guidance and protection from unhealthy influences, sexual deviance and exploitation. In spite of present economic challenges, we urge the members of families never to throw away the important African and Christian values of respect and care for the elderly.

6. A CALL ON THE PRIESTS AND RELIGIOUS

In union with the Holy Father Pope Francis, we thank and encourage those priests and Religious who continue to put themselves at risk in serving the people of God and giving themselves up unreservedly, never to give up. However, we also insist that the times call for holiness of life and more sacrifice on the part of all priests and Religious if we are to be true to our vocations. All priests and Religious must exercise discretion and be committed to a life of simplicity that is consistent with the life of the Master, who had nowhere to lay his head (cf. Lk 9:57-58). An ostentatious and materialistic life of luxury draws unnecessary attention and portends counter witnessing. We also enjoin all priests and Religious to have a healthy 



7 relationship with young people and do more to inculcate the faith in them. Altar servers, members of the Association of the Holy Childhood, teenagers, members of Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria (CYON), Young Catholic Students (YCS), Nigeria Federation of Catholic Students (NFCS) and others, need faith mentoring to ensure a fruitful future for the Church. All forms of abuse of minors and vulnerable adults are to be abhorred, since they are a betrayal not only of the confidence our people repose in us but also of our vocations and ministry as priests and Religious.

7. EVENTS IN THE CHURCH

This year marks the centenary celebration of the Apostolic Letter of Pope Benedict XV, *Maximum Illud*, on the Church's missionary role, issued on 30 November 1919. To mark the celebration, Pope Francis has drawn the attention of the entire Church to the Extraordinary Mission Month of October 2019. This month serves as a momentous opportunity to reflect on the meaning of the missionary mandate of Christ, to assess the effectiveness of our response to this mandate, to re-ignite our zeal for the mission, and provide prayerful support for missionary efforts all over the Catholic world.

The International Young Catholic Students (IYCS) held their World Council meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, from 30 August to 10 September 2019 with the theme: "Taking Action for Peace, Here and Now."

The Golden Jubilee of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) was celebrated in Kampala, Uganda, 19-29 July 2019. The Conferences of Africa and Madagascar were represented. The Jubilee celebration provided a significant

opportunity for the Church in Africa to evaluate her evangelizing strategy and effectiveness of her becoming Family of God in the true and rich sense.

The third Plenary Assembly of the Regional Episcopal Conference of West Africa (RECOWA) was held in Ouagadougou 13-20 May 2019. Thirty-four Nigerian Bishops were in attendance. The Assembly called on the governments and civil authorities in the West Africa region to pay more attention and commit more resources to the development of the youths. The next Plenary Assembly comes up in the year 2022 and will be hosted by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN). We take this opportunity to congratulate Most Rev. Ignatius Ayau Kaigama, the Co-adjutor Archbishop of Abuja and the Apostolic Administrator of Jos Archdiocese, on his re-election as the President of RECOWA.

We congratulate the Ecclesiastical Provinces of Abuja, Benin City, Calabar, Ibadan, Jos and Owerri for celebrating the 25th Anniversary of their erection this year. May the Church of Christ continue to flourish in our land. Amen. We thank God for the increase in the number of Bishops in Nigeria. Most Rev. Francis Obafemi Adesina, the Bishop of Ijebu Ode Diocese, was ordained on 25 April 2019. Most Rev. Patrick Eluke, the Auxiliary Bishop of Port Harcourt Diocese, was also ordained on 9 May 2019. We wish Most Rev. Albert Fasina, the Bishop Emeritus of Ijebu Ode Diocese, a happy retirement and thank him for his services. We thank God for Most Rev. Paul Olowoore who on 12 July 2019 officially assumed office as the substantive Bishop of Ilorin Diocese. We rejoice with and thank Most Rev. Ayo Maria Atoyebi, OP, the Bishop Emeritus of the same Diocese for his stewardship. We regret the death of Most Rev. Kevin

Joseph Aje, the Bishop Emeritus of Sokoto Diocese, who died on 27 May 2019 and has since been buried. We condole with the Bishop, Priests and the Laity of Sokoto Diocese and pray God to grant his servant eternal rest.

We equally congratulate the Dioceses of Maiduguri and Ijebu Ode on their epoch-making achievements. The Diocese of Maiduguri dedicated her St. Patrick's Cathedral on 10 July 2019. Ijebu Ode Diocese celebrated the Golden Jubilee of her canonical erection as a Diocese on 18 July 2019.

8. CONCLUSION: A CALL FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

The Nigerian State is much endowed with natural, human and spiritual resources. Sadly, political authorities have not been completely diligent in relating to these resources neither have they been fair and equitable in distributing them. Justice requires them to give everyone their due, from sharing of resources to caring for the human person. Where there is no fair sharing of wealth and opportunities, there is bound to be crisis. It is only when we have justice that we can have true peace and sustainable development. We enjoin all Christians and people of good will to preach daily this message of justice and peace, and to live it out coherently. May the Blessed Virgin Mary our Mother, the Queen of Peace and Patroness of Nigeria intercede for us.

— **Most Rev. Augustine Obiora AKUBEZE, CBCN President (Archbishop of Benin City)**
 — **Most Rev. Camillus Raymond UMOH, CBCN Secretary, CBCN (Bishop of Ikot-Ekpene)**

THE FIRST PROFESSION OF VOWS EVENT 2019



▲ The newly professed Sisters (L-R): Angelina Ayegoh Francis SSL, Rosemary Yuadoo Ukase SSL, Confidence Ngozi Udeh SSL and Maria Ihotu Agada Pam SSL



▲ The newly professed Sisters flanked by Isabel Mann SSL (left) and Franca Ola (right) as well as bishops (in the background, L-R: Most Rev. Francis Alonge (Emeritus) and Most Rev. John Akin Oyejola and priests



▲ The newly professed present a song after their profession



▲ Novices of the Daughters of the Holy Spirit at the occasion

— Immaculata Mayaki and Esther Pam (Novices)

Four Sisters: Angelina Francis, Maria Agada Pam, Rosemary Ukasi and Confidence Udeh made their first profession of vows on 22 August 2019 at St. Louis Church, Akure.

The Mass began at 10:00 am. The Chief host was most Rev. John Oyejola, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Osogbo, representing the Bishop of Ondo Diocese, most Rev. Dr. Jude Arogundade who was unavoidably absent. Present at the Mass also were Most Rev. Francis Alonge (Bishop Emeritus of Ondo Diocese) ten priests, a deacon, two seminarians, the Novice Directress and the novices of Sisters of the Holy Spirit, Ilesa;

families, friends, well wishers and of course, Sisters of St. Louis — the hosts.

During the homily which was simple and precise, our Lordship encouraged the newly professed Sisters to be steadfast, strong and committed to God who had called them; to obey their superiors, value community life, and be serious in their vocation.

After the homily, the Sisters to be professed were presented to the Bishop by their parents while the Provincial Leader, Sister Isabel Mann attested to their vows and presented the Emblem to them.

When all rites were concluded, the newly professed

sang a hymn titled **'O Lord Jesus, I give my life to you'**, asking God to take perfect control of their every step.

The reception of guests followed immediately in the Novitiate. Our Sisters were celebrated with dancing and singing, presentation of gifts and dining. The novices presented a farewell song titled *"Started all together!"* The newly professed Sisters sang, too, to the admiration of all.

We are happy and grateful to God for the success of the celebration and appreciate the effort of those who made the day splendid.

MOKOLA COMMUNITY REJOICE WITH MONICA SHAAPERA AT THE RECEPTION OF THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION



SECOND FROM THE LEFT: Monica Shaapera

— **Anthonia Eneanya SSL**

It was a joyful day for Monica Shaapera, an aspirant to the Religious life in the Institute of the Sisters of St. Louis as she received the Sacrament of Confirmation on 2 September 2019 at St. Gabriel Catholic Church, Mokola, Ibadan.

The event started with a holy Mass celebrated by the Chief Shepherd of the Archdiocese, Most Rev. Gabriel Abegunrin and concelebrated by Rev. Fr. Mark Shimave and Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Ifah, the Parish Priest.

In his homily, Fr. Mark Shimave said that the Holy Spirit is present in the Church and its members right from baptism, to cleanse her of original sin and grant her supernatural life. By this, we become sons and daughters able to cry out Abba, Father (Roms 8:15-16).

Quoting the scriptures further, he said “All of us, Jews or Greek, have been baptized in one spirit”. All of us have been given one spirit (1 Cor 12:13). At Confirmation, the Church experience, yet again, the power of the holy spirit.

Explaining the word, he reiterated: “Confirmation is not the new arrival of the Holy Spirit but rather an intensification of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. From its Latin root, **confirmatio** means strengthening, consolidating. You cannot confirm what has not been there; what has no foundation. It is not possible. As it were, confirmation completes baptism; it completes the process of initiation into the Catholic family. With confirmation, you become a full, fledged and responsible member of the Catholic Church and so, you will soon be regarded as “adult Catholics” and not babies again. This is an empowerment from the Holy Spirit. You will receive a seal of the Holy Spirit marking you out completely for God.

In conclusion, the homilist reminded the *confirmandi* that as responsible adult Catholics, the church expects them to strive eagerly to know more about the word of God and the teachings of the Catholic faith and to pick up the challenge to be genuine witnesses. He encouraged them not to forget this day, so as not to lose sight of the gifts of the Holy spirit given to them.

The day was also marked with the unveiling of the statue of St. Gabriel, the Patron Saint of the parish.



1st	Sr. Christiana Ibiang	Birthday
2nd	Sr. Christiana Ogundele	Birthday
2nd	Sr. Judith Ahuna	Birthday
3rd	Sr. Mary Theresa Ogbe	Feastday
4th	Sr. Francisca Ola	Feastday
4th	Sr. Francisca Faluru	Feastday
4th	Sr. Francisca Nwanchukwu	Feastday
4th	Sr. Franca Hindi	Feastday
4th	Sr. Francisca Nkwuzor	Feastday
8th	Sr. Matilda Adeboye	Birthday
10th	Sr. Blessing Obiagwu	Birthday
12th	Sr. Martina Adekayero	Birthday
15th	Sr. Theresa Peters Sheyin	Feastday
16th	Sr. Esther Akpa	Birthday
16th	Sr. Roseline Familade	Birthday
16th	Sr. Margaret Yusufu	Feastday

Heart of the MATTER

by Rita Akin-Otiko, SSL

Mentoring: The Missing Link between Education and Productive Practice (Part II)

The first part of this article was published in the June-July 2019 issue.

Mentoring of early career teachers is of utmost importance. A recent study on rural early career teachers (Akin-Otiko, 2019) revealed that most of the participants in the study felt a need for formal mentoring. Perceptions of these teachers indicated several needs. These perceptions include mindful mentor-mentee matching, that is having well-trained mentors, and in same subject area. Such matching is important because new teachers need to gain confidence in their content area. A mentor in the same subject area would be able to provide this necessary support. The participants also asked for well-documented guidelines that incorporates both personal and professional support. They recognized that personal and professional support are different and require separate attention. Every individual comes to the workplace with different personal and professional needs. Mentors must, therefore, recognize this and provide support as needed.

Additionally, participants in the study requested a more structured mentoring plan with goals of the mentoring program clearly stated at the beginning of the experience. A structured mentoring plan with goals provides a roadmap with clear expectations for future plans. New teachers are clear from the beginning on the goals and can anticipate what would be addressed within the mentoring plan.

The research also found that participants wanted more opportunities to be observed, to reflect, to receive feedback, and to be able to have more release time with their mentors. Mentoring takes time and energy. The best way to provide feedback to participants is to observe them while they are teaching. Honest, constructive feedback allows participants the opportunity to reflect upon their areas of strength and weakness and to have open conversations with mentors regarding professional growth.

Further, the study showed the importance of evaluating the mentoring process on a regular basis by everyone who is involved in the mentoring programs. It is crucial to question the program as well as the process. Is the program working in the rural



PHOTO CREDIT - <https://www.teachingattherightlevel.org>

environment? If so, how can it improve? If not, what can be changed to make it better? This evaluation piece is critical to provide an arena for growth.

Decline in the standard of education in Nigeria cannot be far removed from the regression in the quality of teacher education. The Teacher Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), the government approved

Honest, constructive feedback allows [teachers] the opportunity to reflect upon their areas of strength and weakness and to have open conversations with mentors regarding professional growth.

regulatory body for teachers, has as one of its principal functions, “Organization of Internship Schemes and induction programs for fresh Education graduates to equip them with the necessary professional skills before licensing them for full professional practice” (Teacher Registration Council of Nigeria, 1993). However, to date, no evidence exists to show the implementation of these programs. Since teacher education and teaching are not politically neutral, there is need, therefore, for constant evaluation and modification of the nation’s teacher education programs to ensure there is constant training of high quality teachers who are well-equipped for the demands of contemporary learners. Rather than fold our arms helplessly and complain relentlessly about the consequences of poor quality of teachers being churned out of tertiary institutions, research-based mentoring programs might help bridge the gap between teacher education inadequacies, and the high expectations of the teaching profession.

Reference

Akin-Otiko, R.O. (2019). *Formal Mentoring and Early Career Teacher Retention in Rural Public Schools. (Doctoral dissertation)*. [Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (ProQuest Number: 13880526)]



TUMERIC'S HEALING POWERS

— Fr Anselm Adodo (of PAX HERBAL CLINIC & LAB)

People who are not familiar with turmeric (Curcuma longa) often confuse it with ginger (Zingiber officinale) because they look alike. Turmeric is roundish, and if chewed, colours the tongue.

The main constituent of turmeric is curcumin, which gives it its colour. Turmeric is loaded with many healthy nutrients such as protein, dietary fibre, niacin, Vitamin C, Vitamin E, Vitamin K, potassium, calcium, copper, iron, magnesium and zinc. Turmeric can help prevent prostate cancer, stop the growth of existing prostate cancer cells and is best protectors against radiation-induced tumours. It also has a preventive effect against tumour cells such as T-cell leukaemia, colon and breast cancers.

Turmeric is also used in medical circles as an anti-inflammatory and anti-microbial agent. Turmeric lowers the cholesterol level and inhibits platelet aggregation and hence is good for the heart. For those looking for an alternative to anti-inflammatory drugs, anti-depressants and cholesterol drugs, turmeric will be useful. But ensure to discuss this with your health care professional.

In Ayurvedic practices, turmeric has been used to treat a variety of internal disorders, such as indigestion, throat infections, common colds, or liver ailments, as well as topically to cleanse wounds or treat skin sores. Turmeric is mostly used in the form of rhizome powder. Turmeric leaves are mainly used as spices as they impart a distinctive flavour. Although typically used in its dried, powdered form, turmeric is also used fresh, like ginger.

The anti-inflammatory properties in turmeric are great for treating both osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis. It has been found that those suffering from rheumatoid arthritis who consume turmeric regularly experience much relief from pain. Those who suffer from low back pain and inflammation of the spine will also find turmeric very helpful.

Turmeric can be used in the treatment of diabetes by helping to moderate insulin levels. It also improves glucose control and increases the effect of medications used to treat diabetes. Turmeric helps in reducing insulin resistance, which may prevent the onset of Type-2 diabetes. However, when combined with strong medications, turmeric can cause hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar). It is therefore advisable to monitor your blood sugar levels if you combine turmeric with your diabetes drugs.

Using turmeric as a food seasoning can reduce serum cholesterol levels. It is a known fact that high cholesterol can lead to other serious health problems. Maintaining a proper cholesterol level can prevent many cardiovascular diseases. Turmeric contains a substance known as lipopolysaccharide, which helps stimulate the body's immune system. Its antibacterial, antiviral and antifungal agents also help strengthen the immune system. A strong immune system lessens the chance of suffering from colds, flu and coughs.

If you do get a cold, a cough or the flu, you can feel better sooner by mixing one teaspoon of turmeric powder in a glass of warm water and drinking it once daily.

Contact

Newsletter of Sisters of St. Louis, Nigeria Province



Editorial

The Journey

Dear Family,

We hear Prophet Habakkuk say in the Scripture, "I will climb up to my watchtower and stand at my guard post. There I will wait to see what the LORD says and how He will answer my complaint. Then the LORD said to me, "Write my answer plainly on tablets, so that a runner can carry the correct message to others. This vision is for a future time. It describes the end, and it will be fulfilled. If it seems slow in coming, wait patiently, for it will surely take place. It will not be delayed.

We are all travellers here on this plane of existence. The true travellers are not wanderers or vagabonds, but pilgrims with a vision and purpose. They are the ones who, like Habakkuk, would ask, watch and wait patiently on God for they must surely run the length of life. As Ralph Waldo Emerson puts it, "Life is a journey, not a destination." May the God of the journey be the guide for the new PLT and the Province as we begin a new community year.

You'd notice the new look and feel of *Contact* newsletter. We hope you like it. We'd continue to bring to you refreshing features in the course of the year. Thank you for your constant support. Enjoy your reading!

Delumi O'Dunsin



'Pelumi O'Dunsin,
Chief Editor
pelumi.dunsin@yahoo.com
+234 (0)706 204 7492



Anthonia Eneanya SSL
Assistant Chief Editor
toniauc@yahoo.com
+234 (0)703 792 9969

« Word to Live By »

"It is good to have an end to journey toward; but it is the journey that matters, in the end."

— Ursula K. Le Guin



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.