

# Contact



Newsletter of Sisters of St. Louis, Nigeria Province

24 January 2016

## CELEBRATE with joy!



L/R Srs Josephine, Mary, Mary-Theresa and Kehinde invite all to share in the joy of Christmas at the Provincial House in December 2015

**Mary Okewola SSL,  
Ibadan**

The Nigeria Province of the Sisters of St. Louis kept the tradition of organizing a Christmas party for children living in Orogun neighbourhood on the 23 December 2015 at the former Provincial House on Tokunbo Ojo Street, Orogun, Ibadan.

Addressing the children, the Provincial leader, Sr. Isabel Mann encouraged them to celebrate with joy and happiness and to be like Christ in life at home, in school, in church or mosque and everywhere they find themselves. Every Christmas, she said, brings about the grace of the infant Jesus Christ which everyone must enjoy. The birth of Jesus Christ brought about joy, peace and happiness to the world. As a child, Christ was very obedient to his father and to his mother. This is why every child of God must always emulate Christ.

—continued on page 2



Scenes from Orogun neighbourhood 2015 Children Christmas party

### In this Issue

- Celebrate with Joy!
- Akure Zone Associates Reunion
- Ekiti Zone Associates New Executive
- Christmas and New Year in USA
- The Pope and the Church
- Novitiate Christmas Carol
- Miscellanies
- The Joy of Christmas
- Christ is the Reason
- Meet Our New Postulants
- Stay with us Lord
- Editorial



Children having fun at Orogun neighbourhood children Christmas party 2015 (by the extreme right is Sr. Maria Ehikioya)

**Celebrate with Joy!** —continued from page 1

Intimating the children on the importance of Christmas, Sr. Mary Okewola said that Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Christ, the only begotten Son of God, who came to reconcile us to His Father when our first parents, Adam and Eve, disobeyed God by eating the forbidden fruit. Sin came into the world through them but God decided to put the relationship straight by giving us his Son Jesus Christ. We are therefore celebrating our freedom from sin when we celebrate Christmas.

The event engaged the children in various activities which include dancing competitions, riddles and jokes, and time out with Father Christmas. The children were given meals and gifts too. All the members of the Provincial Leadership Team —Srs. Bridget Agum, Isabel Mann, Josephine Tiav and Maria Ehikioya — as well as every other member of the Provincialate community graced the event. Also present was the former Provincial Leader, Sr. Rita Akin-Otiko as well as Srs. Felicia Ogundana, Franca Hindi, Joy Nosa and Maria Ilo. The party entertained about 800 children with their parents from various Christian denominations and Islam.



Sr. Isabel Mann poses with Maxwell Ejodamen winner of the best behaved child among the children at the party (behind is Sr. Rita Akin-Otiko engaging the children)



A multitude of children get their meal packs at the party (with the children are Srs. Bridget Agum & Josephine Tiav)

See more Christmas photos on the Photo Album page. ➔

# A Time of RENEWAL & RE-UNION

## for SSL Associates in Akure Area

**Perpetua Aghoghovia SSL, Akure**

For the Associates of the Sisters of St Louis, Akure Zone, 12,13 December 2015 and 30 December 2015 were memorable days of last year. The first date was their annual renewal retreat while the second date was their reunion with the Sisters. Out of their busy schedule, the Associates ensured that they did not miss out of those important events of 2015.

Rev. Fr. Anthony Oyedele was the priest that took them through the retreat. He encouraged them to flame the fire of faith that has already been ignited. He further encouraged them not to give room for any form of rancour nor allow old age to be a barrier to their serving the Lord. He stressed that mapping out convenient times for their prayers and Christian duties especially as Associates would help a great deal to be more effective in their different commitments. The retreat ended with the Holy Mass on 13 December 2015 at 5.30 am. Ten Associates renewed their commitment at the Mass. The Associates were grateful to God for supporting and making them part of the Sisters of St. Louis as Associates.

On 30 December 2015, they were back together again for the end of year re-union with the Sisters in Akure community. It was a beautiful evening where meals were shared and all danced to the rhythm of a cool evening melody. One of them remarked, 'It is good to be together again'. Indeed, it was good to be together, thanking God for a successful year.



Akure Zone Associates at the retreat



The Associates with Rev. Fr. Anthony Oyedele, Sr. Cecelia Lengpang, Sr. Julianah Egbeleke and Sr. Perpetua Aghoghovia at the end of the retreat

## EKITI STATE ZONE ASSOCIATES GET NEW EXECUTIVE

**Lady Mercy G. Olowolayemo, Ekiti**

At a meeting held on Sunday 29 November 2015, the former SSL Associates Executives of Ekiti Zone was dissolved. Election was then conducted and the under-listed people were elected to form the new executive members:

S/N	NAME	POST
1.	Lady Helen Olufunmilayo Ayoola	President
2.	Mrs. Margaret A. Egunjobi	Vice-President
3.	Mrs. Mercy Olayinka Akomolede	Secretary
4.	Mrs. Felicia Abike Folowosele	Assistant Secretary
5.	Mrs. Julianah Durodola Agboola	Treasurer
6.	Mrs. Helen Oluwafunmilayo Omoyeni	P.R.O
7.	Catechist Veronica Olufunke Oni	Financial Secretary



A cross-section of Akure Zone Associates and Sisters at the end of the year re-union in Akure

—continued on page 4

# Christmas and New Year Celebrations in the USA



Members of Choir for the Christmas Eve

## Florence Akhimien and Matilda Owolagba, USA

The 2015 Christmas and 2016 New Year celebrations for the SSL in the USA were unique as Sr. Matilda Owolagba travelled from Canada to New Jersey to celebrate with Sr. Florence Akhimien. They had a nice time with the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth.

On the Eve of Christmas, the international Sisters were invited to sing Christmas Carols in Nigerian Languages and to make presentation of gifts during Mass.

The congregation was overwhelmed by the music and their dance as they brought gifts to the altar. Some of those who attended the Vigil Mass commented that it was a lively celebration, which they said they had not experienced for a long time.

Then there was a tour. One of the Sisters of Charity took the duo for sightseeing. They went to the Metropolitan Museum of Art where they saw different artistic works of various countries and continents. Every year, the museum displays a very big beautiful Christmas tree decorated with fancy ornaments.



L-R: Miss Anastasia Manomi (Old Girl), Sr. Florence, Sr. Matilda, and Miss Rita Manomi (Old Girl)

— continued on page 6

## Ekiti Zone Associates —continued from page 3

### Ex Officio Members

1. **Lady Mercy Gbemisola Olowolayemo**  
*Former President*
2. **Catechist Flora Oguntuase**  
*Former Vice-President*

In her acceptance speech, the newly elected President, Lady Ayoola Helen, thanked the members for counting her worthy to occupy the post and also commended the outgoing Executive Members for their excellent performance throughout their tenure in office.

On behalf of the newly elected executive members, she promised that they would put in their best to enhance the success of the Mission of St. Louis Family at large and sought the cooperation of all members. We wish them a successful tenure.



by **Anthonia Eneanya SSL,**  
Ibadan

## Communication and Mercy: A Fruitful Encounter

MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS FOR THE 50<sup>th</sup> WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY

*In his message for 50<sup>th</sup> world communication day, Pope Francis speaks of the 'fruitful encounter' between communication and mercy. Below is an excerpt.*

### Dear Brothers and Sisters,

**A**s sons and daughters of God, we are called to communicate with everyone, without exception. In a particular way, the Church's words and actions are all meant to convey mercy, to touch people's hearts and to sustain them on their journey to that fullness of life which Jesus Christ was sent by the Father to bring to all. This means that we ourselves must be willing to accept the warmth of Mother Church and to share that warmth with others, so that Jesus may be known and loved. That warmth is what gives substance to the word of faith; by our preaching and witness, it ignites the 'spark' which gives them life.

Communication has the power to build bridges, to enable encounter and inclusion, and thus to enrich society. How beautiful it is when people select their words and actions with care, in the effort to avoid misunderstandings, to heal wounded memories and to build peace and harmony. Words can build bridges between individuals and within families, social groups and peoples. This is possible both in the material world and the digital world. Our words and actions should be such as to help us all escape the vicious circles of

condemnation and vengeance which continue to ensnare individuals and nations, encouraging expressions of hatred. The words of Christians ought to be a constant encouragement to communion and, even in those cases where they must firmly condemn evil, they should never try to rupture relationships and communication.

For this reason, I would like to invite all people of good will to rediscover the power of mercy to heal wounded relationships and to restore peace and harmony to families and communities. All of us know how many ways ancient wounds and lingering resentments can entrap individuals and stand in the way of communication and reconciliation. The same holds true for relationships between peoples. In every case, mercy is able to create a new kind of speech and dialogue. Shakespeare put it eloquently when he said: *The quality of mercy is not strained. It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath. It is twice blessed: it blesseth him that gives and him that takes*' (The Merchant of Venice, Act IV, Scene I).

Some feel that a vision of society rooted in mercy is hopelessly idealistic or excessively indulgent. But let us try and recall our first experience of relationships, within our families. Our parents loved us and valued us for who we are more than for our abilities and achievements. Parents naturally want the best for their children, but that love is never dependent on their meeting

certain conditions. The family home is one place where we are always welcome (cf. Lk 15:11-32). I would like to encourage everyone to see society not as a forum where strangers compete and try to come out on top, but above all as a home or a family, where the door is always open and where everyone feels welcome.

Emails, text messages, social networks and chats can also be fully human forms of communication. It is not technology which determines whether or not communication is authentic, but rather the human heart and our capacity to use wisely the means at our disposal. Social networks can facilitate relationships and promote the good of society, but they can also lead to further polarization and division between individuals and groups. The digital world is a public square, a meeting-place where we can either encourage or demean one another, engage in a meaningful discussion or unfair attacks. I pray that this Jubilee Year, lived in mercy, "may open us to even more fervent dialogue so that we might know and understand one another better; and that it may eliminate every form of closed-mindedness and disrespect, and drive out every form of violence and discrimination" (Misericordiae Vultus, 23). The Internet can help us to be better citizens. Access to digital networks entails a responsibility for our neighbour whom we do not see but who is nonetheless real and has a dignity which must be respected...

The Museum is a place of attraction and people from different states and countries go there. They also went to the Liberty Park in New Jersey where the symbol of the statue of American freedom is situated.

Furthermore, they had the rare opportunity to celebrate the New Year with Anastasia Manomi and Rita Manomi who are former students of St. Louis College Secondary, Jos. The old girls were so happy to have them in their

midst. They spoke highly of the standard of the education they received from the Sisters of St. Louis, which has contributed to who they are today. They added that the Sisters of St. Louis are dear to their hearts. The Sisters appreciated their compliments and encouraged them to join the SLOSA.

‘Our coming together contributed to the joy of the celebrations of the Yuletide and the New Year, which gave

us a sense of community. Indeed, we had a wonderful and beautiful time!’ said Sisters Florence Akhimien and Matilda Owolagba.

## ST. LOUIS NOVITIATE CHRISTMAS CAROL

**Pascaline Kpadonou and Lucy Abuh, Akure**

The Christmas carols with the theme, ‘REJOICE: OUR REDEEMER IS BORN’, which took place on the 23 December 2015, at the Novitiate was indeed a great celebration.

The programme started with the vespers at about 5 : 45 pm in the recreation room. Visitors began to arrive by 6 pm. At 7 pm, the Novitiate Chaplain Fr. Luke Amuleya said the opening prayer. Sr. Franca Ola gave the opening speech. Welcoming all present, she said that this was a family celebration as Jesus has given us the reason to be joyful, by taking our human nature and dwelling among us. A good number of priests and religious were present at the celebration. They include Most Rev. Dr. Jude Arogundade, Bishop of Ondo Diocese, three Don Bosco Fathers, Rev Fr. Christopher [SMA], Rev Fr. Luke Amuleya (our Chaplain), Rev Fr. Anselm Ologunwa the Cathedral Administrator, and five of our Sisters from the convent: Srs. Perpetual Aghoghovia, . Maryann Anaehobi, . Roseline Fatoba, Cecilia

Lengpang, Immaculata Obanure and Mr. Joseph our music teacher. After the remark we proceeded to the introductory drama which was about the suffering of the people of Israel in the hands of their enemies until God sent a prophet to comfort them with the promise of a messiah who would free them. After the drama, the first song was sung in French, then followed by lessons and more songs.

The fifth lesson which was dramatized was about the annunciation of the birth of Jesus Christ. While the reading was going on, Mary and Joseph [PHILOMENA and PASCALINE] were on their way to Judea and when they got to Bethlehem the time came for Mary to be delivered of her son. It was a period of joy as the Lord of Lords took on human flesh and was born in a manger. Though, he was born in the most unimaginable place in the world, he was still the King of the universe as the three wise men [NKIRUKA, ALICE & EUNICE] came all the way from the East to offer him their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

The Bishop expressed his gratitude to the Sisters and



■ Christmas Tree at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York

especially the Novices for the opportunity to celebrate with them this year’s Christmas carols. He said that it was a joyful thing to celebrate with us. He stressed that the Church is about self-giving and that our Lord Jesus Christ came to the world for this purpose. He thanked us for bringing everyone together and for reminding them once more about the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. He encouraged the Novices to always think of what they can do to make the Novitiate a better place. He ended his speech by thanking everyone present and wished us all a merry Christmas.

Finally, Sr. Margaret Yusuf gave the vote of thanks to all including the Novices for their tireless efforts. The carol came to a successful end with the closing prayer by Fr. Anselm Ologunwa the Cathedral Administrator and the Bishop gave the final blessing.

# January Birthdays Feastdays

*Many Happy Returns*

DATE	NAME	BIRTHDAY/FEASTDAY
1st	Sr. Rosemary Joseph	Feastday
4th	Sr. Theresa Olaniyan	Birthday
21st	Sr. Agnes Abba	Feastday
21st	Sr. Agnes Titilola Ewedeyi	Feastday
21st	Sr. Agnes Adebayo	Feastday
21st	Sr. Agnes Olufunke Adeluyi	Feastday
21st	Sr. Martina Ariyo	Birthday
26th	Sr. Eunice Abiriyi	Feastday
26th	Sr. Lois Moses	Feastday
27th	Sr. Angela Chioma Ogu	Feastday
27th	Sr. Angela Onyema	Feastday
28th	Sr. Agnes Adefunke Babalola	Birthday

THE BEST WAY TO PREDICT FUTURE IS TO **CREATE IT.**

*My Dear Valentine*

## CORPORATE EMAIL

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



# Hurray!

(21 Jan. 95 to 21 Jan. 16)

**SSL Nigeria Province is 21**

Long live Nigeria Province!  
Long live SSL!



*Marywood is 5!*

*We rejoice with Marywood Girls College, Lagos, as she clocks 5 on 22 January 2016. Long live Marywood! God bless your products!*

Have you read Issue 48 of *Musings*?



Be sure to check your mails *regularly!*



L-R: Srs. Mary-Theresa Ogbe, Juliana Ajayi, Maria Ehikiyoa, Rachel Alonge, Isabel Mann, Bridget Agum, Anna Obada, Mary Okewola, Antonia Eneanya and Josephine Tiat at 2015 Christmas in Kolapo



L-R: Srs Juliana, Isabel, Josephine, Anna and Antonia with CWO members of the Divine Mercy Parish, Ibadan after a Christmas Carol visit to Kolapo in 2015



Members of Kolapo-Ishola community sing with CWO members in Christmas Carols in 2015



LEFT: Sr. Bridget gives food packs to children at Orogun Christmas party

RIGHT: Srs Anna, Bridget and Mary-Theresa prepare food packs ahead of the party



L-R: Srs Catherine Adelegan, Rita-Mary Buseni, Magaret Dauda and Christie Udebor with workers in Ewulu at 2015 Christmas



Faustina Zaria and Anne Akinjiola with Sr. Theresa Peter and Sr. Magaret Yusuf



Srs Franca Hindi, Mary Okewola, Isabel Mann and Felicia Ogundana at Orogun Christmas party in 2015



Sr. Theresa Peter distributing gifts to new born babies in a maternity room at 2015 Christmas in Dassa



Sr Margaret Yusuf giving packed food to the sick



Faustina Zaria and Anne Akinjiola with one of the babies at 2015 Christmas party in Dassa

# THE JOYS OF CHRISTMAS



**Sr. Mary-Jo Abba,  
France**

**D**ecember is the time of the year which comes with all the joys of Christmas. But what is the real meaning of Christmas? Is it the gift under the tree or the exchange of gifts, the decorations all over, the cards in the mail, or the parties and shouts of 'Merry Christmas?'

For some people, Christmas may be time of sorrow. They don't have the extra money to buy presents for their children, family,

and friends, and so on. For others, Christmas may be a time of loneliness — because while those who have families celebrate, some persons have no home, relations or friends. Yet, Christmas can be a season of great Joy. Christmas tells us of the time when God showed His great love for us. It can be a time of healing and renewed strength. Jesus Christ's birth brought great joy to the world. Our sharing of gifts, decorations, the shouts of 'Merry Christmas' are all excitements resulting from the fact that the saviour of the world, the

Prince of PEACE, UNITY and LOVE is born.

In Etampés, we have the culture of having Christmas carols, popularly known as chanté nwël, on the Sunday before Christmas. This began some years back with the presence of the Sisters of St. Louis in ETAMPÉS COMMUNITY. The essence is to unite the community of Christians and non-Christians around. By this gesture, we wish to bring about Love, unity and peace as the 'spiritual' message of Christmas.

## Sonorous Reverberations

**Ochechi Francis,  
Ijebu-Itele**

Sonorous reverberations  
Thoughtful celebrations  
Beautiful renditions  
Awaiting His coming  
With glorious joy

And serene sounds of Kumbaya  
Scenes of red, green and gold  
Encapsulated in Christmas  
Louzans in boisterous mood  
Clad in Christmas moments

The 2015 edition of the annual  
Christmas Cantata of Louisville Girls

High School, Itele was a celebration of great ecstasy, love, joy and peace. With parents, students and members of staff as well as friends of the institution in attendance, the celebration was held in the ever beautifully decorated Louis IX de' Crusaders Hall. The programme was full of beautiful scenes and thoughtful Christmas themes.

One major highlight of the beautiful event was the reenactment of the timeless story of the birth of Jesus Christ in ancient Bethlehem. The drama brought back great memories of the epic Hollywood's 'Sound of Music' as the piece was a fusion of music and drama, in perfect harmony. Christmas was coming and we anxiously awaited HIS glorious arrival.

## Ago-Ireti Children Christmas Party

**Alice Ameh and Philomina  
William,  
Akure**

**A**go-Ireti's 2015 Children Christmas party was held on the 28 December 2015, at St. Louis Novitiate, Akure. The programme began at about 1:00 pm. We had one hundred and forty children and youth present at the party. The children all lined up to welcome Father Christmas (Pascaline Kpadonou, a Novice) with songs. She gave the children sweets and biscuits.

The opening prayer was led by Philomena William (a Novice). The M.C., Lucy Abu (a Novice) called on

—continued on page 11

## CHRIST IS THE REASON FOR THE SEASON OF CHRISTMAS

—Rachel Ojo SSL,  
*Ijebu-Itele*

I wake up each morning to experience newness in  
the environs

Joy all over

Peace in the heart of all and in the land

And I hear the birds singing.....

*Silent Night, Holy Night*

*All is calm all is bright*

*Round you Virgin Mother and Child*

*Holy infant so tender and mild*

*Sleep in heavenly peace*

*Sleep in heavenly peace.*

Then I paused to ask

What is the reason for this calmness in the air?

I got an answer

Joy and light of Christmas are here

Songs of Christmas are here to warm and cheer

Excitement is on everyone's faces

I could feel anticipation in the air

It could be lonely for some

Especially when loved ones have gone to rest

Memories are all that are left behind

As the years begin to fade

But Christ's light should never grow dim;

It should ever shine out bright

Our ray of hope in this troubled world

Is our joy of eternal light

When Christmas is spent at the stable of Jesus

Our hurting hearts warms

If we allow Christmas light to shine within us

It leaves us with PEACE.

Merry Christmas!

—continued from page 10

Sr. Franca Ola for opening remarks. Sr. Franca welcomed all the people present at the celebration announced that the reason for the gathering was to share the joy and love of the birth Jesus with one another. She asked the children questions on Christmas and they responded correctly. All the children participated actively with dance and songs. Some SSL Associates came with gifts of

sweets and biscuits for the children. Some SSL Friends were in attendance too.

The Novices sang Christmas songs to entertain the children. After that, some of the children and youth presented songs and dance to entertain everyone. As the dances were going on, food and drinks were served to everybody. Christmas gifts were shared

(school bags, sandals, cups, petticoats and small food warmers) for the children and youths. They were very happy to be at the Novitiate for the celebration. The celebration came to an end at about 4:30 pm. The guests were all conveyed back to Ago-Ireti in the Novitiate and Ago-Ireti buses respectively.

## Meet Our New Postulants!



**Uche Helen Iheakachi**  
*Ebonyi State*



**Ukase Rosemary Yuadoo**  
*Benue State*



**Maria Ihotu Agada**  
*Benue State*



**Confidence Ngozi Udeh**  
*Enugu State*



**Angelina Francis**  
*Kaduna State*

*...the story must be told and re-told in order to own, celebrate and pass it on to future generations ...*

St. Louis General Chapter  
document 2015



## STAY WITH US LORD!

**Jumoke Akinwumi, SSL**

Proudly we told them, “We have no room left in the inn.”

And proudly we hope to tell more, “We have no space in the inn.”

If only we knew that it was the Master we locked out that night, when we told those couple from Nazareth “we have no space left”, we would have put our things together and allowed him to have the whole house... But, alas! It was concealed from us.

I too had a share of the panic at the parish gate of St. Patrick

As though Joyce Rupp was regurgitating my thoughts in her OPEN DOOR —

Will the knock be heard on the other side?  
Will the door be opened?

Yet Kaduna must harbour me for the night since Kano expands.

At least we should have considered that young woman in Labour.

Yes! This act of KINDNESS was done two-thousand years ago

Are we going to make the same mistake again? Those Emmaus guys corrected their own error thirty-three years after

Even though they still did not recognize Him They on their own have learnt through His words

To open the door of their hearts to people

Are we still going to do the same throwing him out in the cold night?

Despite all the shout of Rupp that “let every door be opened” and the White Skull Cap calls it “Year Of Mercy”

Are we still going to proclaim “no space” We must not throw him out into the cold night again.

No! Not again!

## Future Directions

**Dear Family,**

The last time we reached you through here was in December 2015. Happy New Year to you all! We are on the far end of January 2016 already: how time flies! But in reality, it's only been about a month. But even if it is a day, an hour or minutes, *time* is a big factor in this present existence. Time makes the big difference between the San Diego twins who were born minutes apart between 2015 and 2016. Jaelyn arrived at 11:59pm while Luis arrived 12:01. Cute little angels! Time, by barely two minutes, has flung them a year apart. Now, do you still joke with time?



Among my folks, February, by some indigenous punning, means ‘*Look for a place to go or work this year, and early enough!*’ This must apply to us all and at all levels in the Province. Incidentally, we have been emphasising needs assessment, strategic plan and future directions across the strata. We should follow them thoroughly to have good results. We should go to God for wisdom and direction.



**Pelumi O'Dunsin**, Communications Officer; **Mobile:** +234 (0)706 204 7492  
**Email:** pelumi.dunsin@yahoo.com

Earthly knowledge and authorities could be misleading. Let us remember the Wise Men — of course they were wise because they followed the Star, but their singular mistake was that they consulted with the wrong source. May we find the right directions in God this year. Happy Reading!

*Pelumi O'Dunsin*

“Don't tell people  
your dreams;”