



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF LAGOS

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Monthly Bulletin /Circular **MARCH, 2017**/No. 054

TO ALL PRIESTS AND RELIGIOUS WORKING IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF LAGOS, AND THE LAY FAITHFUL

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:

1. **THE MONTH OF MARCH:** I heartily welcome you to the month of **MARCH, 2017**, a month that leads us into the special season of Lent, a season whereby we are called to deepen our relationship with God through prayer, fasting and almsgiving. The month we experience the profound call to repentance and renewal.

The month further presents us with these important feast days: **St. Patrick** (17th March), **St. Joseph, the Husband of Blessed Virgin Mary** (19th March), **Annunciation of the Lord** (25th March).

2. **A FEW THOUGHTS ON LENT:** May I remind all of the following regarding the season of Lent:

- a. **Abstinence:** All the faithful who have reached 14 years of age and above are required to abstain totally from meat or favourite dish or drink on Ash Wednesday (1st of March) and Good Friday (April 14th) and all the Fridays of Lent.
- b. **Fasting:** All the faithful between the ages of 18 and that have not reached 60 years of age are bound to fast. This practice involves limiting oneself to a single full meal or two smaller meals as the case may be. Those who are sick, pregnant or nursing or whose health would adversely be affected by fasting should not consider themselves bound by these norms.
- c. **Parents and teachers** are responsible to see that young persons, who are not bound to the above requirement, are educated in an authentic sense of penance. Also, we are called to pray fervently for those catechumens and candidates who will receive the sacraments during these period.

Below are other ways we can gracefully observe this period of Lent.

- i. **Avoid All Sin:** Keep yourself away from all occasion of sin. Repent and return to God by a good sacramental confession and do appropriate penance.
- ii. Practice **self-control**, be more generous especially in giving to the poor and needy and contributing to the works of the church, remission of debts and payment of just wages.
- iii. Pursue and achieve **reconciliation** with anyone with whom you are not at peace.
- iv. **Read the scriptures** in order to deepen your intimacy with God, spread the kingdom of Christ and help others to know and return to Christ.

- v. **Pray before the Blessed Sacrament**, go to Mass often, if possible daily.
- vi. Be regular at the **stations of the cross** on Wednesdays and Fridays and do it every day if you can.
- vii. Take part in the **Lenten programmes and retreats** that will be organised in your parish. Take full part in the **Holy week ceremonies**.
- viii. Pray your **Rosary** daily.

Bear in mind that all other Fridays of the year remain as days of penance in prayerful remembrance of the passion of Jesus Christ.

2. 40 DAYS OF LENT WITH THE ARCHBISHOP:

Join the Archbishop, Most Rev. Alfred Adewale Martins for daily Lenten Reflections on Radio Nigeria, 103.50 FM at 6.05 am and 8.55pm daily. Also, on Rhythm FM by 5:30pm daily. Kindly inform your parishioners and encourage them to tune in to this frequency and listen to the reflection. May the word of God nourish our souls. Amen.

3. CARITAS LAGOS: This year's Caritas Lagos collection has been scheduled for the second Sunday of Lent, **12th March 2017** in all parishes, quasi-parishes and stations of the Archdiocese of Lagos. Parish Priests and priest-in-charge are kindly requested to create awareness among their parishioners before the date, and encourage them to donate generously on the date itself. We thank God for the good that the Archdiocese of Lagos has been able to do over the past three years under the auspices of Caritas Lagos. Last year, 2016, the Archdiocese disbursed the sum of N32.5m to beneficiaries, comprising dioceses, parishes, seminaries and religious institutes across Nigeria. We hope to be able to continue to do so this year and in the years to come through the kind generosity of the good people of our Archdiocese. God bless them.

4. ARCHDIOCESAN COMMISSION ON EVANGELISATION: In keeping with the missionary mandate of Christ to His Church and to individual members of the Church, we have constituted an **Archdiocesan Commission on Evangelization** to motivate and enhance this mandate in our Archdiocese. This Commission is headed by Msgr. Paschal Nwaezeapu and has the following, as well other individuals, as members: Archdiocesan Directress of Religious Education, the Archdiocesan leaders of the Legion of Mary, the Block Rosary, Association of Catholic Trained Evangelizers and the Charismatic Renewal.

The Terms of Reference of the Commission include the following: proposing fresh methods of carrying out both primary and secondary evangelization efforts in the Archdiocese, stimulating deliberate and focused evangelization activities in our educational institutions, formation of Lay leaders and the youths in particular in the art of evangelization, focus on ministry to teenagers and other matters related to helping people to encounter Christ in a personal way.

We urge all priests, Religious Women and Men and the laity in general to cooperate with this Commission in attaining the goal of evangelization that Christ set for his Church. We are all aware of the challenges to the faith that has led to serious decline in the practice of the faith in some other parts of

the world. We must take proactive steps to ensure that we stem the tide of secularism and the aggressive proselytizing by other sects and denominations by formation of our members in the faith and in the art of evangelization.

If members are strong in the faith having had their encounter with Christ, they will be zealous for proclaiming the faith also.

5. ALPHA COURSE– CATHOLIC CONTEXT

The Alpha Course is an evangelistic course which seeks to introduce the basics of the Christian faith through a series of guided talks and discussions. It aims to help people to either discover or rediscover the meaning and joy of the Christian message. It gives one an opportunity to leverage on the experiences of others in a friendly, warm and simple atmosphere. Alpha is an invaluable tool for evangelization.

Alpha courses are being run in Churches, homes, workplaces, prisons, universities and a wide variety of other locations. The course is being run around the world by all major Christian denominations. In our Archdiocese it has been organised in different Parishes and Centres such as St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church, Victoria Island, Holy Cross Cathedral, Lagos, Catholic Church of Divine Mercy, Lekki, and Lagos Resource Centre, to mention a few.

Parish Priests and Heads of Institutions are encouraged to embrace this laudable Programme and we strongly encourage them to run Alpha in the Parishes and institutions. In order to arrange for the courses, kindly contact Rev. Fr. Anthony Nwosu on 08063853466 or Mrs. Aima Lijadu on 080333454777, 08136304244.

6. PRESENTATION OF BOOKS/WORKS FOR IMPRIMATUR: This is to advise those who want to present their works for Imprimatur, to first seek editing of their works from capable hands particularly their Priests before sending them to the Archbishop for consideration.

7. VERITAS TRAVELS & TOURS an IATA registered Travel Agency owned and sponsored by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria provides Travel and Tour services which include:

- Ticketing
- Pilgrimages
- Educational Tours
- Bespoke Vacations

For more enquires call 08188168700 or visit the Catholic Secretariat Building, No. 6, Force Road, Onikan, Lagos.

8. Admission Requirements for Augustine University, Ilara (AU): We call on Parish Priests and Priests-in-Charge to inform their Parishioners especially those seeking admission to Universities of the Admission requirements for our Augustine University. A minimum JAMB Score of 180 in relevant subject combinations is required. For more information, please visit the University website at www.augustineuniversity.edu.ng.

Available Programmes are:

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES, MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

1. B.Sc. Economics
2. B.Sc. Business Administration
3. B.Sc. Accounting
4. B.Sc. Banking and Finance
5. B.A. English
6. B.A. Philosophy
7. B.A. Religious Studies

FACULTY OF SCIENCE

8. B.Sc. Mathematics
9. B.Sc. Computer Science
10. B.Sc. Microbiology
11. B.Sc. Biology
12. B.Sc. Chemistry
13. B.Sc. Physics

Parish Priests and Priests-in-Charge are expected to include this announcement in their weekly bulletin and keep repeating it.

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

a. Small Christian Communities' Leadership Workshop: There shall be a leadership workshop for the leaders and facilitators of Small Christian Communities in the Archdiocese as follows:

Date: March 4, 2017

Time: 10.00 a.m.

Venue: Holy Cross Cathedral, Lagos.

The workshop is a continuation of a series aimed at improving the leadership skills of leaders in Small Christian Communities in the Archdiocese. Attendance is highly recommended.

b. Lenten Campaign for 2017: The Annual Lenten Campaign for the JDPC will take place on the first Sunday of Lent (March 5th). All Parish Priests and Priests In charge are required to lend their support to the JDPC personnel who will come around the parishes to solicit for support to further the cause of Justice, Development and Peace in the Archdiocese.

c. ARCHDIOCESAN CYON ESSAY COMPETITION: In a bid to awaken the creative genius and enormous potential in our youth, we are organizing an Essay Competition on the Topic: *"The Almighty Has Done Great Things for Me, Holy Is His Name."* The competition is open to all Catholic Youths (YCS, NFCS & NACC) between the ages of 15 and 35. The deadline for submission is March 5, 2017. For participation and inquiries please call 08034931392/07035114047

d. LAGOS ECCLESIASTICAL PROVINCIAL CYON SECOND LEADERSHIP RETREAT AND SEMINAR: This event is scheduled to take place between Friday 10th to Sunday 12th March, 2017, at City of Immaculate Monastery, Sagamu, Ijebu-Ode Diocese. The theme is *"The Almighty Has Done Great*

Things For Me, Holy Is His Name...” We appeal to Deanery Chaplains to send tier Deanery CYON executives to this event.

e. 32ND ARCHDIOCESAN YOUTH DAY: This event comes up on the 23rd of April with Holy Mass at Church of the Annunciation, Abraham Adesanya Estate, Ajah. The reception is at Lagos Business School. We appeal to Parish Priests and Priest-in-Charge to support our youth and also make effort to place Goodwill messages in the programme. Our youths are requested to register online.

f. Priests Recollection: The first Quarterly Recollection for all Priests in Lagos Archdiocese comes up on Wednesday, **8th March 2017**. This will be done at the designated parishes in the four Ecclesiastical Regions of the Archdiocese. The Episcopal Vicars will communicate the venue and time accordingly.

g. Archdiocesan Lenten Pilgrimage: The annual Archdiocesan Lenten Pilgrimage holds on **Saturday, 11th March, 2017**. The venue is **Ave Maria Grotto**, 32 Kusenla Road, Ikate-Lekki, Lagos.

✓ **Theme: MAN DOES NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE, BUT ON THE WORD OF GOD- MATTHEW 4:4.**

✓ **Time: 9.00AM**

All Priests and Lay Faithful are expected to attend and participate actively in this spiritual exercise. Parish Priests should take time to encourage and perhaps arrange for their Parishioners to come in their numbers and they are obliged to be present also.

h. Archdiocesan Novena for the Solemnity of the Annunciation: This Novena begins on the 16th of March to end on the 25th of March, 2017 at the Archdiocesan Marian Shrine, Maryland with the theme: “Do Not be Afraid... (Lk 1:30). The time is 4.30pm daily.

i. 2017 ADMISSION INTO CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF LAGOS SECONDARY SCHOOLS

This is to inform all the faithful in our Archdiocese and beyond that the sales of forms for admission into JSS 1 for 2017/2018 Academic Session in our Archdiocesan Catholic Secondary Schools is in progress.

Forms can be obtained at designated parishes, school of choice, or electronically on www.cmsslagos.ng or any of the following schools’ websites:

<http://www.stgregorycollege.ng>

<http://www.holychildcollegeswikoyi.org>

<http://stfinbarrscollegeakoka.com>

<http://bethlehemgirlscollegeng.org>

<http://www.sacredheartcollegeapapa.com.ng>

<http://www.messmaryland.org>

<http://www.olassyaba.sch.ng>

<http://marywoodgc-lagos.org/>

Sales of forms will close one week to the date of examination.

Entrance Examination Date: 18th March, 2017

Venue: School of Choice

Let us give our children sound Catholic Education!!!

j. Justice, Development and Peace Centre (JDPC)

The Justice Development and Peace Commission Archdiocese of Lagos will be organizing a rally to mark the international day of prayer and awareness against trafficking in persons with the theme: “Children they are! not Slaves”. The rally will take place **Saturday 18th of March 2017**.

Take Off time: 9am prompt

Take Venue: National Stadium Surulere, Lagos

Destination: St Agnes Catholic Church, Maryland, Lagos

Priests, religious and laity are encouraged to join in this rally of awareness against human trafficking.

k. Fertility Week (19 – 26 March, 2017): The Family and Human Life Unit (FHLU) in conjunction with Fertility Care Centre of Africa (FCCaf) marks this year’s fertility week from the 19th to 26th of March, 2017. During the week and in selected Parishes, Doctors, Fertility Practitioners and FHLU will be in parishes to introduce the Creighton Model Fertility Care System and Naprotechnology. There will be talks in these parishes on relevant topics.

The Creighton Model Fertility Care System and Naprotechnology diagnose and treat the underlying causes of infertility so that couples are helped to conceive naturally.

The Archdiocese is organizing this week to give new hope to couples in the way they deal with their fertility situations. On Sunday the 26th, the FHLU office Doctors and Practitioners of Naprotech will meet with interested couples to review their cases and plan follow-ups. This will take place at 19, Maye Street, Yaba. The time is 10:00am prompt. For further enquiries, please call John Chukwuma (08033804494) or Mrs. Bridget Itsueli (08020668151) or Dr. Henrietta Williams (08027195124)

l. Anthony Cardinal Okogie Foundation (ACOF) Scholarship: We thank all those who have bought into this noble and charitable project of the Archdiocese of Lagos initiated in honour of Anthony Cardinal Okogie. Forms to access this scholarship will be out by next month, April 2017. Parish Priests to take note.

m. Catholic Women Organization (C.W.O): This to inform members of (C.W.O) in the Archdiocese of Lagos that election of Officers shall take place in this order;

- Deanery CWO elections to hold in the month of April, 2017
- LACCWO election to hold in the month of June, 2017
- Inauguration of new LACCWO Officers, August, 2017.

Please take note that the guidelines for the election has been given to the co-ordinators and LACCWO executives with instruction to give it to their Parish Priests and Parish CWO president. Also list of delegates to Deanery and LACCWO elections must be countersigned by Parish Priest and the Dean respectively. List of elected officers must be submitted through Deanery CWO Coordinator within one week after elections to LACCWO while LACCWO elected Officers’ list shall be submitted within the same period through the LACCWO Chaplain to the Archbishop.

n. Chrism Mass 2017: The 2017 Chrism Mass Planning Committee meets every Thursday at Holy Cross Cathedral Hall at 6:00p.m. Parish Priests and Priests-in-Charge are reminded to nominate two parishioners to represent their parishes at the Chrism Mass Planning Committee weekly meetings.

All the Parishes that fall under the following deaneries: Isolo, Satellite, Badagry, Festac and Apapa are to send their representatives to the LOC weekly meetings at Ss Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Satellite Town every Sunday at 5:00p.m.

o. Quarterly Returns: Please be reminded that the returns from the following Special Collections are to be made in the first quarter of the year: **Epiphany (1st Sunday of the year), CBCN Collection (3rd Sunday of the Year), Laity Collection (5th Sunday of the Year) and Caritas Lagos Collection (2nd Sunday of Lent).** We remind all Parish Priests and Priests-in-Charge who are yet to remit their returns for the previous quarters including the Special Collections as directed in the last circular note their repeat violation of the deadlines. Once again we encourage repeat defaulters in this matter to make amendments before it is too late.

We reiterate our call that we use the Pay-Direct option or make transfers to forestall the challenges of returned cheques, irregular signatures and other problems that cause cheques to bounce. For those who insist on making their returns with cheques, we request that you kindly pay attention to you entries and signature.

Invariably, when making their returns, Parish Priests or Priests-in-Charge, should also ensure they attach the front page of the Blue Sheets that has the name of the parish and the appropriate quarter on it. Kindly note these in your subsequent submissions.

p. Mater Ecclesiae Monastery:

- **Temporary Profession of Two Novices:** This event will take place on the **25th of March, 2017** at the Monastery. We are encouraged to attend and also remember them in our prayers. **The time is 10:00am.**
- **Monthly Retreat:** Mater Ecclesiae Monastery, Sangotedo, Lagos organizes a day of spiritual retreat for young girls from 15 years and above for the purpose of discerning their vocation. The retreat is scheduled to hold on the **first Saturday of every month.** **Time:** 9:00 am – 4.00 pm. **Venue:** Mater Ecclesia Monastery, Sangotedo, Lekki, Lagos.
- **Mater Ecclesiae Retreat Center:** Mater Ecclesiae Retreat Center is officially open to everyone for personal and Group Retreats. Also you can visit the book centre.

For more inquiries, call 09085648168.

q. Statistical Questionnaire Form: This is to remind Parish Priest and Priest-In-Charge that the Questionnaire Form given to them, should be returned to the Chancery “quam primum” duly completed.

r. WALK FOR THE POOR: The maiden edition of WALK FOR THE POOR – a Charity Walk organized by Couples for Christ (CFC) will take place on Saturday April 1, 2017. It will start at 8.00am from *Saints Mulumba and David Catholic Church Lawanson* Surelere and end at the National Stadium.

The Walk is being organized to draw attention to the plight of the poor and disadvantaged children in our communities and to mobilize support for them. It is also being organized to raise awareness and support for the **CHILD SPONSORSHIP PROGRAMME** – a unique Scholarship Programme of Couples for Christ.

The theme of the Walk is **“TAKE A STEP AND CHANGE THEIR FUTURE.”** All faithful are enjoined to participate; support or sponsor. For more information can be obtained by contacting Couples For Christ on **07031808979 or 08033481595**

s. CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF FATIMA APPARITION IN LAGOS ARCHDIOCESE: The archdiocese will be having her centenary celebration of the Fatima Apparition on Saturday 27th May, 2017 beginning with Rosary Procession starting from National Stadium, Surulere at 7.00am to the Marian Shrine Maryland. This will be preceded by 9 days programme in all Parishes between 18th & 26th of May. We kindly request the co-operation of Archdiocesan Organs and Marian groups with Fr. Andrew Abhulimen, Co-ordinator/Archdiocesan Chaplain of Block Rosary Crusade.

t. CATECHISTS/RELIGIOUS EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

• **THE ANTIOCH PASTORAL INSTITUTE:**

Application for admission into Antioch Pastoral Institute for the 2017/2018 session are invited from persons desiring to be trained as catechist and catechism teachers. You are also qualified to apply, if you are a lay liturgical minister, a parish office staff, religious community, society, or individuals wishing to develop your knowledge of Catholic faith. If you do not belong to any of these categories but desire to be trained as a pastoral agent, please feel free to apply

Forms are obtainable at the Catechetics/ Religious Education Department Archdiocese of Lagos, 19, Maye Street, Yaba, Lagos, on or before April 28, 2017 for 500 only. For further inquiries call 0803504118, 08033574050, and 08066224284.

u. Lagos Archdiocesan Music Commission (LAMCOM): The Lagos Archdiocesan Music Commission (LAMCOM) celebrates the Resurrection of Jesus in a musically grand style as she presents: **THE FESTIVAL OF CHORAL CHAMPIONS**. It is a day set aside to share in the Love, Joy, & Gladness of Easter. Musicals ranging from Easter songs, Classics, Traditional Hymns, etc. from the Deanery choirs in our Archdiocese shall be rendered. **Date:** Sunday 30th April 2017.

Venue: Our Lady of Perpetual Help, V.I, Lagos.

Time: 4pm prompt.

v. ARCHDIOCESAN LAY LEADERS' SEMINAR/WORKSHOP: The Workshop for all Lay Leaders in the Archdiocesan, Deanery, Parish Laity Council, Archdiocesan and Deanery Executives of Lay Organisations/Societies/Associations and members of PPC & PFC, comes up on Saturday, 13th May, 2017. Theme: "Good Leaders are products of good followers". The programme starts with accreditation by 7am. Parishes (comprising of Executives from PPC, PFC & Laity Council and Archdiocesan Lay Organisation/Society) are to send Ten (10) delegates while Deaneries are to send Five (5) delegates. Participation Fee : N1,500.00 per participant. PLEASE NOTE: No one person should double in representation [i.e. representing Parish or Deanery and Society at the same time]

w. Visitation of The Statue of Our Lady of Fatima to Parishes: As part of preparations towards the centenary anniversary of the apparition of Our Lady of Fatima, members of the World Apostolate of Fatima (Blue Army) will be visiting parishes in the Archdiocese. We ask Parish Priests and Priests-in-Charge to give them audience.

x. Family and Human Life Unit (FHLU):

1. MARRIAGE THEOLOGY AND LIVED EXPERIENCE

Part Time Classes:

YABA CENTRE

- i. Weekday, First Tuesday of each month for 10 months begins 7th February, 2017
- ii. Weekend, First Saturday of each month for 10 months begins 14th February, 2017.

ISOLO CENTRE

St Francis Catholic Church Idimu

Fourth Saturday of each month for 10 months began 25th February, 2017

IKORODU CENTRE St. Augustine Catholic Church Ikorodu

Fourth Tuesday of each month for 10 months began 28th February 2017

FESTAC CENTRE Holy Family Catholic Church Festac

Second Tuesday of each month began 14th February, 2017

APAPA CENTRE St Margaret Catholic Church Osho Drive

Third Tuesday of each month began 17th January 2017

2. LOVE AND LIFE Ovulation Method (BILLINGS) of Natural Family Planning

First Saturday of each month for 7 months began 4th of February 2017.

3. CANON LAW COURSE FOR LAITY

Third Friday of each month for 10 months began 17th February, 2017.

4. BASIC CHRISTIAN COUNSELLING COURSE PART 1

One Friday a month for 3 months beginning from 20th January 2017

For all individuals who are interested and wish to be trained to work in areas of Marriage, Family and Human Life as Facilitators, Counselors or Social workers. PLEASE register now by calling: 08033804494 or 08023547952 for more details

VENUE: Church and society building, 19 Maye Street, off commercial avenue, Sabo, Yaba.

Course fee: 3,500 per session (includes materials, tea break and lunch) and duration for each session 6hrs (10am to 4pm).

Total course fee with certificate: Marriage theology and Lived experience: 40,000.00; Canon Law for Lay Faithful: 40,000.00; Love and Life (billings) ovulation method of natural family planning: 30,500 and Basic Christian Counseling: 12,000.00. NOTE: PAYMENT DETAILS: FAMILY AND HUMAN LIFE UNIT-CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF LAGOS, ECO BANK ACCT NO. 3772028512.

9. PRIESTLY ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY: PRIESTLY ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY: We congratulate, rejoice with and request your prayers for Rev. Msgr. Obanla Anthony & Frs. Adegun Francis, Chikezie Wisdom, Ekpo Benjamin, Ideawor Kingsley, Martinos Theodore, Okpala Melchizedek, Emmaneul Likoko, John Nwanze and Gilbert Thesing as they mark their Sacerdotal Ordination anniversary this month. May God grant them lasting joy and the grace of final perseverance. *Ad multos annos!*

(Signed)

+ Alfred Adewale Martins

Archbishop, Metropolitan See of Lagos.

ARCHDIOCESE OF LAGOS