



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF LAGOS

19, CATHOLIC MISSION STREET, P. O. BOX 8, LAGOS-NIGERIA

TEL/FAX: 01- 8448669

Monthly Bulletin /Circular

MARCH, 2019 /No. 078

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: Welcome to the month of March, 2019, a month that leads us into the special season of Lent in which we are called to deepen our relationship with God through prayer, fasting and almsgiving. With the **Ash Wednesday** (March 6) the Church ushers all into the solemn season of Lent to experience the profound call to repentance and renewal. This month 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: As we begin the season of lent, may I remind all of the following regarding the season:

a. **Abstinence:** All the faithful who have reached 14 years of age and above are required to abstain totally from meat or favorite dish or drink on Ash Wednesday (March 6) and Good Friday (April 19) and all the Fridays of Lent.

b. **Fasting:** All the faithful between the ages of 18 and 60 years are obliged to fast. In practice, fasting involves limiting oneself to a single full meal or two smaller meals a day. Those who are sick, pregnant or nursing or whose health would adversely be affected by fasting should not consider themselves bound by this norm.

c. **Parents and teachers** are responsible for helping young persons, who are not bound by the norms regarding fasting and abstinence to recognize the genuine sense in penance and self-denial. We are required to also to pray fervently for the catechumens who will receive the Sacraments of Initiation during this period. Please find below some of the other ways we can observe this period of Lent so as to benefit from the graces of the season:

i. **Avoid Sin:** Keep yourself away from all occasions that could lead to sin. Repent and return to God by a good sacramental confession and do appropriate penance if you fall into sin.

- ii. **Practice self-control**; be more generous especially in giving to the poor and needy and in 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 Days of penance in prayerful remembrance of the passion of Jesus Christ

3. 40 Days of Lent with the Archbishop:

Join the Archbishop, Most Rev. Alfred Adewale Martins for daily Lenten Reflections on Metro 97.7 FM at 6.00 am and 9.00pm daily. Priests should inform their parishioners and encourage them to tune in to this frequency and listen to the reflection. May the word of God nourish our souls. Amen.

4. Salient points in our 2018 Priests Annual Retreat recalled for further reflection:

- a. We were **created** human, **called** to Christian life, **chosen and consecrated** as priests and **sent** on a mission.
- b. our mission is to be *Spiritual Masters* and not mere *Religious Administrators*
- c. In order to be *Spiritual Masters*, we must be different and like the Apostles make a deliberate choice to dedicate our lives to **prayer** and **preaching the Word**. This will give us the spiritual edge that we need in order to minister as Masters.
- d. In order to be *Spiritual Masters* we must have *Spiritual Self Perception* so as to assess who we believe in. **We must have faith in God and faith in ourselves. God has conferred 'titles' upon us that give us authority. We are Sons of God (SG.), Friends of Jesus (FJ), Landlord of God (LLG) i.e. Temple of the Holy Spirit and Another Christ (AC).**
- e. We must be possessed **not** by a person or a thing but by the Holy Spirit.

f. Knowing who we are, we must use the arsenal that God has given us to accomplish our mission: i. **Communion** with God, one another and all Creation; ii. Authority of the **Word of God**; iii. **Discipline**. An undisciplined priest is a cross and a hindrance to the mission

g. There are powers in the world that can attempt to sabotage our mission. The most powerful is the power of **sin** in all its manifestations. The Power of the Holy Spirit helped the Apostles to overcome all the powers that tried to mute the voice of God. We must be in the power and under the influence of the Holy Spirit

h. we need intimacy with the Holy Spirit in order to be effective in our mission.

May the Lord continue to guide us as we strive to do His will and live our vocations.

5. Formation of New Parish Pastoral, Laity and Finance Councils: by now we expect that all parishes must have inaugurated the Councils **for a four-year non-renewable tenure**. We hope that those parishes in which the members of the old councils were merely recycled have made the required correction and have followed the provisions of the Guidelines. Deans are required to ensure strict adherence to the Guidelines.

6. Leadership Training for Priests: The Leadership training for **all Priests** working in the Archdiocese started since January in all the Regions of the Archdiocese. This comes to remind the participants in the first batch that the 3rd Module will take place from **March 27 to 28, 2019**. Participants are expected to be arrive punctually at the different venues so that we can make full use of the time allotted.

7. 2019 Elections: With the Presidential elections come and gone, let us not forget that we are all Nigerians and our political inclinations do not make us enemies, we still remain brothers and sisters. So, let us avoid any form of hatred or animosity. Let us face our future with patriotism and hope bearing in mind that whatever the outcome of the election is, it is still ordered by God's design.

In view of the forthcoming gubernatorial elections, we continue to encourage all who have registered and received their Permanent Voter's Cards (PVCs) to ensure that they exercise their franchise and not allow themselves to be intimidated or discouraged by any factor at all.

Secondly, we encourage all the faithful to keep up with the prayers for Nigeria that we began since August 2018 with the confidence that the Lord will take absolute control of the situation that give us concern as a people. Let us keep on using the rosary, the known effective weapon that

we have to battle against evil in confronting our present predicaments. May the Lord be our help and strength.

8. Provision of Scholarship for Augustine University.

For some time now, we have been repeating the item concerning support for Augustine University in our monthly circular. By now we presume that everyone is familiar with the expectations and so it remains only to call attention to the request that **parishes should offer scholarship to children in their parishes who are from indigent homes but are brilliant and have admission to the University.** We ask all Priests and the lay faithful to keep this request in mind.

9. Implementation of the Archdiocesan Youth Policy and Care of the Youth: We launched the Archdiocesan Youth Policy since August 2018. We hereby reaffirm the need that Parish Priests and others concerned with the implementation should do the needful in ensuring that the Policy fulfils the purpose for which so much effort was expended in order to publish.

We also appeal to everyone to take responsibility for the care of the Youths in our Archdiocese. We call on all priests, Religious and Lay faithful to please take matters concerning the Youths with all seriousness and to give them support as they require e.g. with regards to empowerment, general welfare and attendance at programmes.

10. Admission Requirements into St. Augustine College of Education, (Project T.I.M.E): We call on Parish Priests and Priests-in-Charge to inform their Parishioners that the above-named College has commenced admission procedures for its 2018/2019 session. Admission requirements include:

(a) A minimum JAMB Score of 200 and above for Degree programmes and 100 and above for NCE Programmes & OND.

(B) Available Programmes and their requirements include:

University of Ibadan Degree (Full-Time and Distance Learning Centre) - 5 Credits at one sitting

OR

NCE (Full-Time and Part-Time) - 6 Credits at two sittings.

PDE (PGDE)- First Degree or H.N.D. from any recognized tertiary institution

Catechesis- Practicing and intending Catechists and O' Level Certificate.

For further enquiries: 08034989663, 08034919553, 08034700872, 08023891300, and 08065954493

We urge Parish Priests and Priests-in-Charge to kindly inform their parishioners

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

a. 2019 CARITAS SUNDAY COLLECTION (17 March): For the past 5 years, our Archdiocese has been reaching out to support many Dioceses, Parishes, Seminaries, Convents and other Institutions in need through the assistance of CARITAS LAGOS. This kind gesture has been made possible by the generosity of many Catholics in the Archdiocese. In order to continue this noble cause, **Sunday 17 March, 2019 is Caritas Sunday Collection.** A special collection will be taken in all parishes on this day and Parish Priests are directed to sensitize their parishioners beforehand and ensure that THE TOTAL COLLECTION is immediately paid into the Caritas Account between Monday 18th and Wednesday 20th of March, 2019. Account details are as follows: FIDELITY BANK, 4110033795, CARITAS LAGOS. We count on your cooperation.

b. Archdiocesan Lenten Pilgrimage: The annual Archdiocesan Lenten Pilgrimage will be organized by the Archdiocesan Evangelization Commission and hosted by the Lekki Region.

Date: Saturday 16th March, 2019

Venue: Ave Maria Grotto, Lekki

Time: begins at 8:00am.

Theme: "without Faith it is impossible to see God" - Hebrews 11: 6

All Priests and Lay Faithful are expected to attend and participate actively in this spiritual exercise. Parish Priests & Priests-in-Charge are requested to encourage and arrange for the participation of their Parishioners to come in large numbers. In view of the above, we expect that **all Parish Priests/Priests-in-Charge would have organised Confessions for the Lay Faithful in their various parishes so as to ensure that the time spent at the pilgrimage is maximally utilized.**

c. JDPC Lenten Campaign 2019 (31st March): The JDPC annual Lenten Campaign for 2019 is around the corner. This Campaign is an annual programme of the CBCN, and is implemented by each Arch/Diocese during the period of Lent. To this effect there will be a Lenten Campaign Collection taken up in all Parishes on **Fourth Sunday of Lent - 31th March, 2019** at all Masses.

Proceeds should be paid into the JDPC, Lagos, **First Bank Account - 2003805932** within two weeks of taking up the collection. Parish Priests and Priests-in-Charge should give this announcement the publicity it deserves.

d. Catholic Prison Chaplaincy: this is to inform Parishes, Organizations, Societies or Individuals in the Archdiocese who wish to visit any of the prisons especially during the Lenten season and

Eastertide to kindly contact the Archdiocesan Prison Chaplain: **Rev. Fr. Kingsley Agada on 07038040153**. This will help to facilitate logistics.

e. Chrism Mass 2019: The 2019 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 parish 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.

f. Laity Week Celebration- the annual Laity week celebration comes up from the 10th - 17th March, 2019 in all parishes in the archdiocese. We are all encouraged to participate actively.

g. Mass Wine: we have received a new supply of Mass Wine. Given the inflation in the cost of importation duties and other logistics, parishes can now collect Mass wine from the Chancery at a token of **#19,500:00** per carton.

h. Priests' Day with Catholic Friendly Society: This celebration which was earlier scheduled for Thursday, 28th February, 2019 has been rescheduled for **Tuesday, 5th march, 2019** at Sagamu. All Priests are encouraged to be part of this *weight-shedding* camaraderie.

i. Oblates of St. Joseph: with joy we announce the elevation of the Oblates of St. Joseph to the juridical status of a **Province** under the title of **Our Lady Queen of Nigeria**. **The official inauguration of the Province and the Diaconate Ordination of some the brothers will take place on March 19th the Solemnity of St. Joseph, Husband of Mary. The venue is St. Mary's Catholic Church, Isolo by 10am.** You are all cordially invited to join in the celebration.

j. St. Raphael Divine Mercy Specialist Hospital, Ijede Ikorodu: in celebration of the World Day of the Sick, our St. Raphael Divine Mercy Specialist Hospital, Boge Town, Ijede Road, Ikorodu, is offering two weeks medical checkup slated to run from **11th to 24th March, 2019**. The checkup consists of services which include; Children, Basic, Drugs, Comprehensive, Open, ANC, Scan, Obstetric, and Surgery Packages, all at subsidized rates. **Time:** 8am- 2pm Daily **Venue:** Hospital Premises.

k. Archdiocesan Novena for the Solemnity of the Annunciation: this comes up between the 16th to the 25th of March 2019 at the Archdiocesan Marian Shrine, Maryland. **Theme:** *Do not be*

afraid, you have found favour with God. (Luke 1:30), **Time:** 4:30 p.m daily, **Solemnity of Annunciation:** March 25th, 2019.

l. Small Christian Communities' Leadership Workshop: there shall be a Leadership Workshop for Leaders and Facilitators of the Small Christian Communities in the Archdiocese on **March 9th, 2019** by 10.00am at Holy Cross Cathedral. This workshop is aimed at improving the Leadership skills of Leaders and Facilitators of the Small Christian Communities in the Archdiocese. Attendance is highly recommended.

m. Diamond Jubilee: the pastoral team and the entire parishioners of St. Leo Catholic Church, Ikeja, invites all to the 75th birthday celebration of their Parish Priest and Vicar General of the Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos, **Rt. Rev. Msgr. John K. Aniagwu** on the **15th of March, 2019**.

The programme of event is as follows:

- **Mass and Talk with Catholic Study Group-** 11th March, 2019, at 6:30pm
- **Mass and Talk with Parishioners-** 12th March, 2019, at 6:30pm
- **Charity Visitations-** 13th March, 2019, at 10am
- **Mass at St. Leo's Private School and interaction with the Pupils-** 14th March, 2019 at 8:30am
- **Birthday Thanksgiving Mass-** 15th March, 2019, at 12:30pm
- **Grand Finale Mass and Reception at St. Leo, Ikeja-** 23rd March, 2019, at 10am

For more information, contact the PPC Vice Chairman, Mr. Joseph Obileye.

n. LAGOS INTERDIOCESAN TRIBUNAL

i. Seminar on Marriage Act: There is a new development by the Federal Government on the Marriage Act. There will be a seminar to further educate priests on this matter. The date for the seminar will be communicated soonest. Deans are to forward the names of two priests to represent their deanery to Rev. Msgr Philip Hoteyin. The marriage facilitators of each deanery must also attend.

ii. Denial of Funeral Rites: On those to be allowed or denied: Those stipulations of the Code of Canon Law are to be adhered to (cf. canons 1183- 1185). In any situation of doubt or confusion, especially on prudent judgement concerning "**manifest sinners**", parish priests/ priests in charge should kindly have recourse to the Archbishop.

o. St. Augustine's College of Education Diploma in Catechetics: Parish Priests are requested to send their Catechists, Catechism Teachers and Marriage Counsellors for Advanced Diploma in

Catechetics at St. Augustine's College of Education (Project TIME) Akoka, Yaba, Lagos. For more enquiries, visit www.sacoedng.com or www.sacoed.edu.ng or call 01-793-3594 12

p. Admission into the Archdiocesan Catholic Secondary Schools: This is to inform everyone that admission into JSS 1 for the 2019/2020 academic session in all Archdiocesan Catholic Secondary Schools is in progress. **The Entrance Examination comes up on 2nd March, 2019 at the selected schools.** Forms can be obtained from the school of choice, all Catholic Primary Schools in the Archdiocese, selected parishes and electronically on www.cmsslagos.ng.

The 10 Catholic Archdiocesan Secondary Schools are:

1. St Gregory College, South-West, Ikoyi
2. Holy Child Girls College, Ikoyi
3. St Finbarr College, Akoka
4. Bethlehem Girls College, Abule-Ado
5. Mater Ecclesiae College, Epe
6. Sacred Heart College, Apapa
7. St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic College, Okomaiko
8. Maryland Comprehensive Secondary School, Maryland
9. Our Lady of Apostles Secondary School, Yaba
10. Marywood Girls College, Ebute-Metta

Let us give our children sound upbringing in the Catholic Faith.

q. Application for Anthony Cardinal Okogie Foundation Scholarship: We wish to inform all interested applicants that the Application Form for the Anthony Cardinal Okogie Foundation Scholarship for the 2019/2020 can be obtained from the Archdiocesan Website. Applicants are requested to click on the following link: <http://www.lagosarchdiocese.org/down/g14.pdf> to download the forms, fill and submit them to the Chancery.

r. Admission into Cecilian Academy of Sacred Music (Foundation Program): the Academy is calling for admission from prospective candidates who wish to acquire foundational knowledge in Music to register as admission is still ongoing. Courses offered include Rudiments/Theory of Music; Voice and Conducting; Basic Piano; Gregorian chant and Applied Music (any instrument of your choice). Instructional centres are located in Festac; Surulere; Lekki; Ikeja and Ejigbo. Tuition fee is very affordable. For further enquiries, call/text: 09083036356/09030905196/08056526856 or directorceasam@gmail.com

s. Admission into Alberione Institute of Communication Education, Iju, Lagos.

The above is a media training institute with the core objective of training value-based, socially conscious and responsible media professionals. Admission for 2018/2019 Session is on for those who want to specialize in the following: One year Professional Diploma in **Print, Broadcast and Online Journalism**, 3-4 months Certificate Course in **Video Editing, Cinematography, Make-up Artistry, Creative Arts & Designs, Graphics, Photography, Theatre Art.**

The institute is affiliated to the Nigeria Union of Journalists. It is an offshoot of SPICE-St Paul Institute of Communication Education, Mumbai, India, Ireland, Brazil, Mexico, Philippines. For more information, visit www.aicestudy.com, info@aicestudy.com, enquiries@aicestudy.com or Tel: 08101806352, 08066938408.

t. Lagos Archdiocesan Music Commission 2019 Choral Competition: this year's completion is tagged "**Archbishop Choral Competition (A.C.C 2019)**" in honour of our Archbishop. It begins from February 10th through June 2019 to commemorate the Archbishop's 60th birthday.

The following parishes and dates have been selected to host the different groups in the first round of the Competition:

Group 1: St. Agnes Maryland - March 17

Group 2: St. Leo Ikeja - March 10

Group 3: Sacred Heart Ojota - March 24

Group 4: St. Francis Oregun - March 10

Group 5: St. Thomas Okokomaiko - March 31

Group 6: St. Andrews Ilemba - March 24

Group 7: Holy Family Festac - Feb 24

Group 8: Church of Annunciation, Festac - Feb 24

Group 9: Holy Cross Cathedral Lagos - Feb 10

Group 10: St. Anthony Gbaja - Feb 10

Group 11: Our Lady of Perpetual Help VI - Feb 24

Group 12: Church of Transfiguration VGC - March 31

Group 13: Ss. Philip and James Lekki - March 17

Do kindly note that:

□ Competition is compulsory for all parishes

□ Parishes are to pay N5,000.00 participation fees

□ Parish priests/priests in charge are to ensure active participation of their Choirs.

□ All Priests in charge of the hosting parishes are kindly implored to give maximum co-operation to the Music Commission for the use of their parish/halls

For further enquiries, please consult the Music Commission Director, Fr. Peter Osuntope on 08023700587

u. Catechetical Training for Catechists/ Catechism Teachers and Pastoral Assistants

The Antioch Pastoral Institute hereby informs all Parish Priests and Priests-in-charge of the training for Catechists and Pastoral Assistants for the 2019/2020 session. The courses are as follows:

- **Online Certificate Course in Catechesis and Faith Development:** This course is accessed online but classroom contact holds every quarter on the first Saturday of the relevant month. The course draws from the Scriptures, the Catechism of the Catholic Church and selected documents of the Second Vatican Council, offering a balance of theology, spirituality and catechetical skills. **Duration:** Two Years, beginning from 6th of April, 2019. **Venue:** St. Dominic's Parish School Block, Herbert Macaulay Road, Yaba.
- **Certificate in Catechesis:** This course is for developing and advancing Catechetical activities for Catechists, Catechism Teachers, Sunday School Facilitators and Parish Pastoral Assistants. **Duration:** 18 Months, with class contact holding 3rd Saturdays of every month beginning from 6th April, 2019.
- **Introduction to Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC):** This is a refresher course in the four Pillars of our faith as presented in the CCC. It is a mandatory program for all Catechists and Catechism teachers. **Duration:** Lecture holds 4th Saturdays beginning from May to August, 2019.

To obtain form and other enquiries, contact Religious Education Department, 19 Maye Street Off Montgomery (Opp. Lebanese School) Yaba or call: 08033574050, 08056550390 or 08066224284

v. **Family and Human Life Unit:** St. John Paul II School for Marriage and Family of the Archdiocese is running training courses on Church teaching for interested persons in the following areas:

- Marriage Theology and Lived Experience
- How to Teach Human Sexuality to Children and Youth- Theology of the Body
- Managing Couple Fertility Naturally (Love and Life Method)
- Basic Christian Counseling Skills
- Canon Law for the Laity

Note that courses for Part-time and Full-time begin in February and September, 2019, respectively. For more enquiries and registration, call Martina Ozegbe on 08130285777 or 07030616170.

w. Mater Ecclesiae Monastery:

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. Time for Public Adoration to the Most Holy Sacrament is from Mondays to Saturdays 9:00am to 8:30pm; on Sundays after 9:00am Mass to 12:15pm; and from 3:30pm to 5:00pm. Also, you can visit the Book Centre. For more inquiries, call 09085648168

x. Quarterly Returns Collections: Please be reminded that the returns from the following Special Collections are to be made in the first quarter of the year: **Epiphany-06/01/2019, AUI Collection- 13/01/2019, 10/02/2019, and 10/03/2019, Caritas Lagos Collection- 17/03/2019, and Laity Collection-31/03/2019.** 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 few circulars to do so immediately.

We reiterate our advice that Parish Priests/Priests-in-charge should use the **Pay-Direct** option or make **bank 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 financial returns with cheques, kindly pay attention to your entries and signature.

We want to reiterate again that when making returns, Parish Priests or Priests-in-Charge, should ensure they attach the front page that has the name of the parish and the appropriate quarter on it and fill the all the pages of the Booklet.

12. 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, Emmanuel 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!*

13. Bereavement: We announce, with deep sympathy with the family concerned, the demise of **Pa Godwin I. M. Brown-Ugbomeh**, the father of **Rev. Fr. Anthony C. Brown-Ugbomeh OFM Cap.** He died in the month of January, 2019 and would be buried in March. Kindly celebrate Mass for the repose of his soul and consolation to the family. May God grant him eternal rest. Amen.

+ **Alfred Adewale Martins**
Archbishop, Metropolitan See of Lagos

ARCHDIOCESE OF LAGOS