



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF LAGOS

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Monthly Bulletin /Circular **APRIL, 2020** /No. 091

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 April: Welcome to the month of April 2020, a month during which we begin the celebration of the special season of Easter. The season begins with the celebration of the Resurrection of Christ, the climax of the Holy Week celebrations. In this month, these remarkable events leading to our salvific Mystery are celebrated: **Palm Sunday** (April 5th), **Holy Thursday** (April 9th), **Good Friday** (April 10th), **Holy Saturday** (April 11th), **Easter Sunday** (April 12th). Throughout the entire month, the Church continues to celebrate the joy of Easter and the gift of New Life in Christ. Though the way to the Resurrection was the Via Crucis, the Sacrificial Lamb of God is now and forever Christ our Light, the eternal High Priest of the New Covenant. And his sorrowful mother, the *Stabat Mater* of Good Friday, is now the jubilant *Regina Caeli*.

2. Easter: The word "Easter" is derived from Old English which itself derives from a German word that means the "East." The word refers to the place from which the rises, bringing light, warmth and hope. The Sun is a symbol of the Risen Christ, the true Light of the world. The Paschal Candle is a central symbol of this divine light, which is Christ. It is kept near the ambo throughout Easter Time and lit for all liturgical celebrations. Easter, of course is the celebration of the Lord's resurrection from the dead, which leads to his Ascension to the Father and the sending of the Holy Spirit upon the Church. Easter Time is the most important of all liturgical times. There are 50 days of Easter from the Easter Sunday to Pentecost. It is characterized, above all, by the joy of victory over death, expressed most fully in the great resounding cry of the Christian: *Alleluia!* All other expressions of faith flow from faith in the

resurrection: *"If Christ has not been raised, then empty is our preaching; empty, too, is your faith."* (1 Cor 15:14)

The octave of Easter comprises the eight (8) days which stretch from the Easter Sunday to the following Sunday. It is a way of continuing to savour the joy of the Easter day itself. In a sense, every day of the Octave is celebrated like a Sunday. Easter is truly *"the day that the Lord has made."* From Sunday to Sunday, from year to year, the celebration of Easter in this world will lead us to that blessed day on which Christ has promised that He will come again in glory to take us with Him into the kingdom of His Father. May this Easter bring us good tidings and heavenly blessings.

3. Mass of the Chrism 2020: Given the circumstance brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and in line with Decree of the Congregation of Divine Worship on the celebration of Holy Week Services, our Mass of Chrism for this year would be celebrated at a date when it shall also serve for us to rejoice in thanksgiving to God for seeing us through the present trying times.

4. Holy Week Ceremonies: Since we cannot transfer the Holy Week celebrations and Easter to another time, we shall celebrate in ways most appropriate for these times. The lockdown that government has imposed upon our State has compelled us to alter the aspects of the earlier directives given in our circular on **Curtailing the Spread of Coronavirus**. The following shall be the way by which we shall celebrate the Holy Week this year:

- **Palm Sunday:** shall be celebrated in the same way as we have been celebrating Sunday Masses in the last two weeks except that as the priests celebrate, they shall bless the quantity of palms that they would need for Ash Wednesday of 2021 DV.
- **Mass of the Lord's Supper:** may be celebrated also by priests in their parishes but without the presence of the lay faithful. Of course, there should be neither washing of feet nor procession with the Blessed Sacrament at the end of Mass. The Blessed Sacrament shall be reposed in the Tabernacle as usual.
- **Good Friday:** As the celebration is done by priests in their parishes, there should be a prayer *for those who find themselves in distress, the sick and the dead* added to the Universal Prayers during the celebration.

- **Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday:** Celebrations shall be held in the Cathedral and Parish Churches. *For the Baptismal Liturgy only the Renewal of Baptismal Promises is maintained (Cf. Missale Romanum)*
- **Easter Monday:** Of course, the normal *Galilee Day Celebration* is not to be held this year.

5. FASTING AND PRAYING: APRIL 2nd - 8TH 2020: We know that *unless the Lord builds the house, in vain does the builder labour; and unless the Lord watches over the city, in vain does the watchman keep vigil.* it is therefore important that we step up our prayers asking God to bring an end to the coronavirus problem. Whenever there were scourges and plagues in the history of mankind, prayers turned out to be the ultimate solution. It is in this light that we ask all Priests, Religious and lay faithful to pray more fervently than ever before.

We already have a prayer that we are saying, and I hope that this is being said at families' prayers. In addition to that, I want to enjoin all the faithful in the Archdiocese of Lagos to embark on a period of Fasting and Prayers for the intention of bringing an end to the COVID-10 problem.

From 2nd of April 2020 to 8th of April 2020 we should all **FAST** and **gather together in PRAYERS** at 3.00pm each day for the **Divine Mercy Prayer**. The lockdown that we are experiencing at this time is Divine Providence that makes it easy for us to gather as families to say the prayers at 3pm for the duration. When the faithful is **united in prayer** for a **common intention** at an **agreed time**, we have no doubt that the promise of God that He would be present *wherever two or three are gathered in His name* will come to pass. He will, indeed, be present to receive our prayers and grant our hearts' desire.

Our effort to fast is apart from the Lenten fast and the Divine Mercy Prayer is particularly directed towards asking for God's mercy concerning the coronavirus pandemic all over the world. Priests and Associations of the Lay faithful should kindly pass this message to all their members wherever they may be.

6. SUPPORT OF THE LESS-PRIVILEGED: We use this opportunity to also encourage all parishes to seek out ways by which they would help to meet the needs of the less privileged in their parishes particularly at this moment of lockdown in our state. The Committees

responsible for welfare in the parish should be mobilized to see how the parish can respond to the needs of these unfortunate members of the Body of Christ.

7. LUMEN CHRSTI AND LIVE TRANSMISSION OF MASSES: The liturgical celebrations for weekdays, Sundays and Holy Week shall continue to be transmitted live on Lumen Christi Television Network as usual. We use this opportunity to express our gratitude to the Founder of **Lumen Christi**, Prince Soji Olagunju, the Management and staff for the good work that they are doing in transmitting Mass Live and daily from our Cathedral since the present problems of COVID-19 disrupted the way we celebrate normally. They have been doing the transmission without charging a kobo and with a sense of duty and enthusiasm.

We use this opportunity to call upon the lay faithful individually, Associations of the Lay Faithful, Corporate organizations etc. to support the initiative of Prince Soji Olagunju, the Founder of Lumen Christi who has been using private resources to serve the cause of the Gospel in these last few years. We ask you to sponsor the programmes that they list out for your attention in order to encourage them and keep the station going to the greater glory of God and in service of God's People.

8. PASTORAL PRESENCE TO THE FAITHFUL: We want to commend the Parishes that have found ways and means of keeping the line of communication with their parishioners open in these past weeks that we have not had communal celebrations of the Liturgy. Many parishes have been getting across using the different media of communication. We also commend those who have arranged for live streaming of Masses where possible.

We urge our lay faithful not to just simply **watch the Mass** being broadcast but to actually **participate** in it as if it was not on a screen: Dress up as if you were going out of your house to the Church, sing when the songs are being sung, stand up, sit and kneel at the appropriate times. Make an **Act of Spiritual Communion** at the appropriate time so that you may receive the Lord Jesus, spiritually into your hearts. The Faithful should remember that they have a duty to contribute to the support of their parishes perhaps using the account details that have normally been placed on Parish Bulletins.

9. CHANCERY OFFICE: please be informed that in line with the Federal and State Governments' efforts to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chancery office would remain closed till further notice. However, our digital channels would remain open for

your use. You can reach us directly through our direct mobile line: **07025128843**; through our email: arclagos@yahoo.com; or through all our social media platforms.

10. LENTEN REFLECTIONS WITH THE ARCHBISHOP: The daily Lenten Reflections of Most Rev. Alfred Adewale Martins continues on the following media:

NTA, DSTV Channel 251 @ 6:55pm

Lumen Christi, DSTV Channel 350 @ 12:50pm

Radio: Metro 97.7FM @ 6am & 9:05pm

All our Social Media Platforms: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram: Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos. God Bless you as you listen to the reflection through the different media. May the Word of God nourish our souls. Amen.

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

a. Archdiocesan Curia Meeting and Archdiocesan Finance Council Meeting: The scheduled meetings of the Curia and the Archdiocesan Finance Council meetings have been postponed and they shall hold on future dates to be announced due to the present lockdown in our state.

b. 2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE N.C.D.P.A: The 2020 Annual General Meeting of the Nigeria Catholic Diocesan Priests' Association (NCDPA) will be hosted by the Lagos Ecclesiastical Province, with Lagos Archdiocese as the venue. The date of the event is being reviewed due to the Corona Virus pandemic. The Opening Ceremony begins with the Holy Mass to be celebrated by the Archbishop and Bishops of the Lagos Ecclesiastical Province **at St. Leo's Catholic Church, Ikeja, Lagos by 10:00am.**

You are all invited to the opening and closing ceremonies. We also encourage all Organizations, Societies and Groups to give them the necessary support for a successful hosting. For more information, you may contact Rev. Fr. Stephen Akinsowon on 08038688853.

c. Parish Guidelines (Revised Edition): This is to inform all Priests and Lay faithful that the Revised Edition of the **Parish Guidelines** is out. Kindly pick up copies for your Parishes and Lay organizations from the Chancery.

d. St John Paul II School for Marriage and Family: This Archdiocesan School is offering Learning opportunities and Skills development for Marriage Facilitators, Married Persons, Singles/Widowed, Parents, Lay/ Youth Leaders

List of courses/trainings

1. Marriage Theology and Lived Experience.
2. Teaching Sexuality Education in the Family
3. Theology of the Body Made Simple for Youth Teenagers and Adults
4. Natural Family Planning (NFP) Instructors Course
Managing Couple Fertility Naturally (Love & Life Method)
5. Basic Christian Counselling Skills
6. Formation of Children (one day courses)
 - i) Parenting Skills for parents of children Ages 1-10
 - ii) Training a Child to love
 - iii) Steps to Building Character and Developing Core Values
7. Holidays at FHLU for Students (July/August)

This program encompasses a range of interesting activities and information for positive youth enhancement and leadership.

- How to improve Relationships with Parents and other Adults.
- Teenagers, Love & Relationships

Courses begin in February 2020

For enquiries and registration, call Martina Ozegbe on 0813 028 5777 and 07030616170.

e. Department of Social Communications:

i. Archdiocesan Catholic Herald Newspaper: As part of the efforts to widen the scope of the Archdiocesan Newspaper: The Catholic Herald, the Directorate of Social Communications hereby welcomes write-ups and contributions on matters of faith and morals as well as social issues from priests, religious (Male and female) as well as lay faithful. You can send your write-ups/ contributions to: **thecatholicherald2007@gmail.com** or **tonygjee23@gmail.com** for consideration.

We are also appealing to Parish Priests and Associates to please publicize the *Catholic Herald Newspaper* during Altar announcements. May God continue to bless and reward our apostolate. Amen.

f. The Antioch Pastoral Institute: The Antioch Pastoral Institute, Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos begins its Catechetical training program for full-time and voluntary Catechists. The resumption dates are scheduled as follows:

1a. CENTRE ONE

Date: 3rd Saturday of every month beginning from May 16, 2020

Venue: Cardinal Okogie's Hall, Holy Family Parish, 22 Road, Festac Town

Time 10:00am - 3:00pm.

1b. CENTRE TWO

Date: 2nd Saturday of every Month beginning from May 23, 2020

Venue: The School Block, St. Dominic Parish, Herbert Macaulay Way, Yaba, Lagos

Time: 10:00am - 3:00pm

1c. CENTRE THREE

Date: 4th Saturday of every Month beginning from May 23, 2020

Venue: SS. Philip and James Catholic Church, New Road Bus Stop by Chevron Round-About, Lekki

Time: 10:00am - 3:00pm

Note: Forms are available at the Holy Family Catechist Office, Festac Town, Ss. Philip & James Parish Catechist Office, Lekki and Religious Education Department, Yaba.

The Liturgical Workbook for Sunday School/Children Mass- Year A is on sales. Order your Copies from Religious Education Department, YABA @ ₦ 500 only.

g. Admission into Alberione Institute of Communication Education, Iju, Lagos: AICE-Iju, Lagos is a media training Institute in Nigeria with core objective of training value-based, socially conscious and responsible media professionals in the Church and society at a large.

Admission for 2019/2020 Batch 'C' session is on for those who desire to specialize in the following: 1 Year Professional Diploma in Print, Broadcast and Online Journalism (Full/Part Time); 3-4 Months Certificate Course in Creative Writing, Video Editing, Cinematography,

Film-making, Creative Arts & Designs, Web Design, Graphics, Photography, Theatre Art, Make-up Artistry.

The Institute is affiliated to the Nigeria Union of Journalists and offshoot of S.P.I.C.E-St. Paul Institute of Communication Education, Mumbai, Bangalore, Brazil, and Mexico

For more information, visit www.aicestudy.com, info@aicestudy.com or Tel: 08066938408, 08101806352

h. Admission into the Cecilian Academy of Sacred Music 2019/2020 Session: The Academy is calling for registration from prospective candidates who wish to acquire knowledge of 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 or text: 09030905196, 08083036356, 08056526856 or send email to: directorceasam@gmail.com.

i. CYON APOSTOLATE:

- **ARCHDIOCESAN YOUTH DAY (AYD) IKORODU 2020/35TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION:** The earlier schedule of April 26th, 2020 has had to be reviewed in line with the present coronavirus pandemic. We are working towards new dates either at the end of August or the beginning of September 2020. Further information will be given as time goes on.
- **Introducing CatholicYouths.com:** CatholicYouths.com is an online community of Catholic Youths with a focus on helping young Catholics/Christians grow spiritually in the understanding of the Catholic Faith. Young Catholics and Christians now have the opportunity to ask questions on areas of the Catholic Faith. The website also has articles that are tailored to the challenges affecting the spiritual and moral life of young people. Visit www.catholicyouths.com to ask, learn and grow in the Catholic faith.

j. St. Raphael Divine Mercy Specialist Hospital, Ijede: This Archdiocesan Catholic Hospital calls the attention of the Priests, Religious and lay Faithful of the Archdiocese as well as the general public to their World Class health care services at the Archdiocesan 300-

bed purposely built hospital. The hospital boasts of exquisite private and semi-private wards in a serene and safe environment ideal for complete recuperation. The hospital offers the following services:

Diagnostic Services: which include, but not limited to; Complete Hormonal Profile, Full Laboratory Service, Scan, E.C.G, X-Ray. **Well Equipped Theaters:** for different specialized surgeries for **Eye, General, Obstetrics and Gynecology and Urology**. St. Raphael also has dedicated Labour Ward, Children's Ward with Incubators.

Other Services available include: Circumcision, Childhood and Adult Immunization, Ambulance Services, Mortuary Services.

Available Clinics with Consultants Include: Obstetrics/Gynecology, Ophthalmology/EYE, Pediatrics, Dental, Cardiology, Urology and Nephrology.

N:B: All these are in addition to our round the clock Out-Patient, Pharmacy, and Nursing Departments manned by warm and friendly professionals. Also, St. Raphael is a recognized primary and secondary service provider by NHIS and other reputable **HMO's**. Call Us Now: **08093878456, 08122360765, 07050949223, 09054465257, 09097370915, 08162916669.**

St. Raphael Divine Mercy Specialist Hospital... Caring with Compassion!!!

k. 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: **AUI Collection- 08/03/2020, Caritas Lagos Collection- 08/03/2020, JDPC Collection- 22/03/2020, Laity Collection-29/03/2020.** Due remittance should be made of the collections that were not affected by the suspension of Mass with the Lay faithful in attendance.

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

I. Mater Ecclesiae Monastery:

Monthly Retreat: Mater Ecclesiae Monastery, Sangotedo, Lagos organises 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.

12. PRIESTLY ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY: We congratulate, rejoice with and request your prayers for Rev. Frs. Raphael Adebayo, Gabriel Amologbe, Vincent Olofinkua, Richard Fasuyi, Johnpaul Olaniran, Chukwubuikem Opechi OP, Ramagele Rakotsoane OMI and Benedict Okolo CM as they mark their Sacerdotal Ordination anniversaries 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 families concerned, the demise of **Late Mrs Florence Dada Anyansi**, mother of Rev Fr. Paul Anyansi; and **Late Pa. Bernard Okelola Fasuyi**, father of Rev Fr. Richard Fasuyi. They died in the month of March, 2020. Kindly celebrate Mass for the repose of their souls and the consolation of their families. May God grant them eternal rest. Amen.

Signed

+ Alfred Adewale Martins

Archbishop, Metropolitan See of Lagos