



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF LAGOS

19, CATHOLIC MISSION STREET, P. O. BOX 8, LAGOS-NIGERIA
TEL/FAX: 01- 8448669

Monthly Bulletin /Circular

DECEMBER, 2015/No. 039

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 DECEMBER

We thank the Lord for preserving our lives to the last month of the year 2015. The month of December is a month of expectation, joy and celebration. It comprises the Seasons of **Advent** and **Christmas**, during which we celebrate the **Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception**. This is a month of stock taking, self-evaluation and thanksgiving to God.

The first 24 days of this month fall within the Season of Advent during which we prepare spiritually and physically for the coming of the Child Jesus. The liturgical colour of this season, purple, paints a spiritual portrait of hope and expectation, of longing and waiting, of conversion and penance in preparation for Christmas.

The Christmas Season expresses the boundless love of God; a love that heralds hope, inaugurates peace, engenders faith, and establishes the triumph of justice. Christmas is indeed a season of joy, gladness, love, forgiveness, peace, salvation and celebration. While we busy ourselves with traveling, shopping, partying, cleaning and other material preparations for Christmas let us not lose sight of its spiritual significance – the opportunity to encounter Jesus and embrace his offer of friendship and salvation.

I wish you all a merry Christmas and a happy New Year in advance.

2. SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION: It is important to note that it is within the month of December that we celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. The Archdiocesan Novena for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception started on **Sunday, 29th November, 2015** to end on **Tuesday, 8th December, 2015**.

Theme: Mary, Mother of Mercy (John 2:1-5)

Venue: Archdiocesan Marian Shrine, Maryland.

Time: 4:30pm daily.

As Advent prepares us for Christmas, our hearts must turn to the immaculate Mary who eagerly awaited the birth of Jesus by her life of prayer, purity and whole-hearted submission to God's will. We hereby encourage everyone to participate in this spiritual exercise.

3. EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE OF MERCY: The Year of Mercy is upon us and we cannot thank God enough for this propitious occasion to experience the joy, serenity and peace of Divine Mercy. God's mercy knows no bounds and extends to everyone without

exception. It is a time to encounter the God who never tires of forgiving us; the God who responds to the gravity of sin with the fullness of mercy and shows us always that His mercy is greater than our sins. Indeed, “from the heart of the Trinity, from the depth of the mystery of God, the great river of mercy wells up and overflows unceasingly (*Misericordiae Vultus*, 25).”

As contained in our Special Circular on the Year of Mercy, we have drawn up programmes for this Year beginning from the **8th of December, 2015 (Solemnity of Immaculate Conception) to end on the 20th of November, 2016 (Solemnity of Christ the King)**. We wish to remind everyone that the ceremonies for the **OPENING OF THE JUBILEE DOOR** will take place on **Sunday the 13th of December (3rd Sunday of Advent) at Holy Cross Cathedral by 11.00am**. Let us also keep in mind that Pilgrimages to the Cathedral is open to all Catholics and it is **EVERY TUESDAY** throughout the Year. For more information, please refer to the Special Circular.

4. **CORPUS CHRISTI:** We commend all those who solemnly carried out their duty of procession in honour of our Eucharistic Lord. Processions like this, we must always remember, are done every year; we therefore have sufficient time to plan well to ensure better orderliness and special decorum. May our Eucharistic Lord bless and increase our faith. Amen.
5. **FAMILY ROSARY AND EUCHARISTIC ADORATION FOR SIX MONTHS:** The Catholic Bishops of Nigeria, have called on all to pray. In many respects, it can be said that our Nation is today at the crossroads. Although the general elections were peaceful, our problems are far from over. The Bishops therefore feel the need to renew its call to prayer. In addition to the prayers already being said for the Nation, CBCN asks individuals, families and parishes to intensify their prayers for a period of six months, beginning from the month of October and according to the following programme:

(i) **Family Rosary- Every Saturday evening**

(ii) **Rosary and One Hour Adoration in Parishes-Last Sunday of the month (between 3.00 pm and 6.00 pm).**

The family Rosary and the Eucharistic Adoration should always end with either the **Prayer against Bribery and Corruption** or the **Prayer for Nigeria in Distress**. This six-month prayer programme is expected to end on 4th April 2016, the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord.

6. **RECENT PASTORAL PLACEMENTS AND APPOINTMENTS:** We wish to bring to your notice the pastoral placements and appointments of the following priests:

1. **Very Rev. Fr. Olaitan Julius – Dean, Lagos Island Deanery**
2. **Very Rev. Fr. Augustine Nnaemeka-Dean, Agege Deanery**
3. **Very Rev. Fr. Michael Karikunnel SDB –Vicar for Religious**
4. **Very Rev. Msgr. Edmund Babashay Akpala, Parish Priest, St. Sabina Catholic Church, Idi-Mangoro**
5. **Rev. Fr. Cornelius Olaniran, Asst. Parish Priest, St. Sabina Catholic Church, Idi-Mangoro**

6. **Rev. Fr. Martin Oguntoyinbo, Parish Priest, Holy Family Catholic Church, Ajara**
7. **Rev. Fr. Nathaniel Ogar, Priest-In-Charge, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church, Shasha-Akowonjo**
8. **Rev. Fr. Vincent Ukoma (OMI), Priest-In-Charge, St. Gerald Majella Catholic Church, Jakande-Alaba**
9. **Rev. Fr. John Oyegoke (OMI), Asst. Priest-In-Charge, St. Gerald Majella Catholic Church, Jakande-Alaba**
10. **Very Rev. Fr. Sylvester Onasanya-Asst. Parish Priest, St. Matthew Catholic Church, Amukoko (Fidei Donum Priest from Ijebu-Ode Diocese)**
11. **Rev. Fr. Victor Eze, SDV. Asst. Parish Priest, St. Anne's Catholic Church, Itire.**
12. **Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Omoreke, SDV. Asst. Parish Priest, St. Peter's Catholic Church, Langbasa-Ajah.**

7. **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.

8. **INVITATION OF PRIESTS FROM OUTSIDE THE ARCHDIOCESE FOR RETREATS/PROGRAMMES:** We wish to remind all Priests that the extant practice of seeking the permission of the Archbishop before inviting any priest from outside Lagos for retreat remains. On no account should a priest be invited to preach retreat or anchor parish programmes in the Archdiocese without the permission of the Archbishop. We strongly advise all priests to take this instruction seriously. Failure to comply will be considered a serious infraction. We wish to put such invitations **on hold** till further notice. In the interim, let us make use of the Priests we have in the Archdiocese for such spiritual exercises.

9. On the Blessing of Sacramentals:

Our attention has been drawn to the name, kind, nature and symbolism of some of the items and articles that our people bring for blessing. Some of these items bear spurious imitation and semblance of sacramentals but actually profane and mock our faith. It amounts to religious syncretism and sacrilege to use these items wilfully as they make a mockery of our Lord Jesus, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the saints and go against the teachings of the Church. Such items include rosaries/pendants with illuminati signs such as a snake imposed on the crucifix and other encryptions; unidentifiable oils and other pagan icons.

We call on all Catholics to desist from purchasing such articles or putting them forward for blessing. Officially approved Catholic Bookshops are the right places to buy Sacramentals. The managers of such Bookshops must themselves ensure they make their purchases from the right sources. We also advise all Priests to exercise discretion, pastoral vigilance and practical judgment when blessing articles and other related items bearing in mind that "there is a thin line between truth and lie." Please confer CCC 1667-1679 for more information on the Blessings of Sacramentals.

10. **OLD CATHOLIC APOSTOLIC CHURCH WORLDWIDE:** Our attention has also been drawn to the presence of this religious body that calls itself "Catholic" but totally unaffiliated with the Roman Catholic Church in our Archdiocese. This dissident body is

championed by **Rev. Fr. Raphael Fagbohun** originally of the Catholic Diocese of Ekiti but now suspended by his Bishop and no more in good standing with the Church. They teach and promote incongruent doctrines that are totally opposed to the Catholic faith and exploit the similarity in name to woo and deceive our people into believing it is one Church.

We use this medium to restate unequivocally that there is only One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church founded by our Lord Jesus Christ that has the Pope, the successor of St. Peter as its visible head and the Bishops as the successors of the Apostles. Because of the fundamental difference in doctrine, theology, spirituality and ministry between the Catholic Church and this body, we consider all actions, liturgical and sacramental, performed in this Church as unorthodox and invalid in the eyes of the Church.

In line with the notification of the CBCN and in keeping with my mandate to maintain and defend the integrity of the Catholic, I hereby state categorically that this religious body is not in communion with the Catholic Church and therefore warn all Catholic faithful in the Archdiocese of Lagos to keep away from all their services and activities. Anyone who does the contrary does so at his or her own risk. We must be vigilant and wary of wolves in sheep clothing. All priests should please take note.

11. 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 Institutions are encouraged to embrace this laudable Programme. If you wish to run Alpha in your Parish or institution, kindly contact **Rev. Fr. Anthony Nwosu on 08063853466** or Mrs. Aima Lijadu on 080333454777,08136304244.

12. AUGUSTINE UNIVERSITY

i. Inauguration Ceremony of Augustine University: The Archbishop of the Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos and Proprietor of Augustine University; His Grace, Most Reverend Alfred Adewale Martins, formally inaugurated the Augustine University on Friday, October 23rd, 2015 at the University Campus, Ilara-Epe.

ii. Admission Requirements for Augustine University: We implore Parish Priests and Priests-in-Charge to inform their Parishioners especially the Jambites of the Admission requirements for the 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 to include this announcement in their weekly bulletin and keep repeating it for the next twelve months.

13. ST. AUGUSTINE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION (PROJECT TIME) AFFILIATED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN: Admission is in progress for the 2015/2016 Session. With a minimum JAMB Score of 180 and above for Degree programs and 150 and above for NCE programs, St Augustine College is the place for you. Our programs and their Requirements include:

- **B.Ed. degree (Full-Time and Distance Learning Center)** – 5 Credits at one sitting
- **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 Catechist OR O'Level Certificate.
For further enquiries, call – 07051491674; 07051592559; 08034919553.

14. VERITAS TRAVELS & TOURS an IATA registered travel agency owned and sponsored by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria. Provides Travel and Tour services which includes:

- Ticketing
- Pilgrimages
- Educational Tours
- Bespoke Vacations

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

15. LUMEN CHRISTI TELEVISION NETWORK: Lumen Christi Television Network is introducing live Streaming/Broadcast on PCS, Mobile Devices and Social Media. You can also watch Lumen Christi TV online @ www.lumenchristity.com or on TV Afrique, IPTV and Amazon TV through Kindle Appstore. Lumen Christi has also established “links” to enable all potential viewers download apps directly from its website as stated above.

For those who are yet to see us on their home TV Screens locally and desire to do so, kindly obtain a decoder and dish for ₦ 10, 000 at Lumen Christi TV House at Our Lady of Fatima Complex, Lekki. For more information please contact the management on 08126280868.

16. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- a. Archdiocesan Small Christian Communities Leaders Workshop:** The Archdiocesan Small Christian Communities is scheduled to hold as follows:

Date: 5th December, 2015

Venue: Holy Cross Cathedral, Lagos

Time: 10:00 am

The workshop is part of an-ongoing series aimed at improving the leadership skill of leaders and facilitators of Small Communities in parishes in the Archdiocese. Our focus shall be on celebrating the coming Year of Mercy declared by His Holiness.

- b. Annual Priests Retreat:** The Annual Retreat of Priests in the Archdiocese for this year has been scheduled to hold from 30th November to 11th of December, 2015.

✓ **First Batch: 30th November to 4th, December, 2015**

✓ **Second Batch: 7th to 11th, December, 2015.**

✓ **Venue: Eucharistic Heart of Jesus Generalate's *Domus Fidei*, Ikeja, Lagos.**

To this end you are kindly requested to promptly fulfill your financial obligation through the Priests Welfare Committee Chairman, **Rev. Msgr. Jerome Oduntan**. Please note that the retreat is obligatory and not optional. Hence, **ALL** must attend.

- c. Archdiocesan Advent Pilgrimage:** This Year's Advent Pilgrimage will be hosted by Ikeja Region, Lagos.

✓ **Date: 12th December, 2015**

✓ **Venue: St. Augustine's Catholic Church, Ikorodu.**

✓ **Time: 10. 00 a.m**

All Priests and Lay Faithful are expected to attend and participate actively in this spiritual exercise. Parish Priests & Priests-in-Charge are kindly requested to encourage their Parishioners to come in large numbers.

- d. Catholic Youth Organization Of Nigeria (CYON) Archdiocese Of Lagos**

There will be Archdiocesan Youth Award (AYA) and Beauty Pageant on 12th December, 2015. For further information, please contact the Archdiocesan CYON Chaplain on 08025693293 or the President on 08062920945.

- e. Nigerian Catholic Diocesan Priests' Association Meeting:** This is to bring to the notice of **ALL** Diocesan priests, irrespective of Diocese of incardination that a meeting of the Lagos Archdiocesan Chapter of the Nigerian Catholic Diocesan Priest's Association, will hold on **Wednesday, 16th December, 2015 at St. Leo's Catholic Church, Ikeja by 10:00 am**

- f. Priests' and Religious Get-together 2015:** This has been scheduled to hold on **Tuesday, 29th December, 2015.** Venue: St. Agnes Catholic Church, Maryland. Kindly endeavour to be present. The time is **11.00am**

- g. Quarterly Returns:** Please be reminded that the returns from the following Special Collections are to be made in the third quarter of the year: **Peter's Pence, Education**

Sunday and St. Augustine's College. We remind all the Parish Priests and Priests-in-Charge who are yet to remit their returns for the 1st, 2nd and 3rd quarters especially the Special Collections or are not up-to-date in this regard to please do so **unfailingly before the end of December.**

The Chancery also requires that every payable levy and special collection be made with different cheque leaves to avoid mix-ups. Also, when making their returns, Parish Priests or Priests-in-Charge, should ensure they attach the **Blue Sheets** with the front page that has the name of the parish and the appropriate quarter on it. Kindly note these in your subsequent submissions.

h. Veritas University of Nigeria Abuja (VUNA): We are expected to remit 5% from the Harvest proceeds to the Chancery for Veritas University. The Cheque should be made payable to the Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos with Veritas University written behind. We are grateful for all previous contributions.

i. Catholic Prison Chaplaincy:

- **Christmas Celebrations with Inmates:** His Grace, Archbishop Alfred Adewale Martins will be celebrating Christmas with the inmates on **Friday, 26th December, 2015** by 10.00am at **Ikoyi Security Prison, Ikoyi**. We therefore appeal to parishes, societies, organization and individuals to support this celebration. You can reach the Prison's chaplain on 08030600439 or Archbishop's Secretary on 08063853466.
- Any Parish, Society, Organization and individual that wish to do Advent or Charity Visitation to any of the five prisons in Lagos State should call the Prisons' Chaplain, Rev. Fr. Jacob Adeyemi C.M. on 08030600439 to avoid embarrassment from the Prisons' Authorities.

j. 2016 Liturgical Calendar/Archdiocesan Directory: The 2016 Liturgical Calendar (Ordo) is out. Kindly pickup copies for your Parishes from the Chancery. The 2015 Archdiocesan Directory is underway. We shall inform you once it is available. Please note that the bill for these items will be added to your annual Chancery bills.

k. Priests' Annual Leave-Roster: Priests are to submit months of preference for their annual leave for next year, 2016 to the Priests' Welfare Committee not later than January, 2016.

l. Orientation and Induction of New Priests: We have the tradition in the Archdiocese of giving an orientation programme on liturgical and pastoral practices in the Archdiocese to newly ordained priests as well as priests newly appointed to serve in the Archdiocese of Lagos. This will come up between **14th and 16th of January, 2016**. The venue for the orientation is **Domus Fidei, Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, Ikeja, Lagos. Arrival is 9.00pm on Thursday, 14th January**. All those concerned should note that participation in this orientation programme is mandatory.

m. Valentine's Day with the Archbishop: This annual event will come up on **Saturday, 6th February, 2016 at St. Finbarr's College, Akoka**, with the theme: **"Love: A Perfect Measure of Understanding God's Mercy"**. Topic: **The Importance of Mercy in A World That is Searching for Love**. It will commence with the Holy Mass to be celebrated by the Archbishop, His Grace, Most Rev. Alfred Adewale Martins by **10:00 a.m.**

For more information, enquires and advert placement, please contact: 08033481595, 08034314510 or the Director's office on 07046395586, 08127736117 or 01-4535922

n. FAMILY AND HUMAN LIFE UNIT (FHLU):

- **Basic Christian Counselling Course** for one Tuesday a month for 3 months commencing 10th November, 2015 at Holy Family Catholic Church, Festac Town. (Festac Deanery) and for one Friday a month for 3 months commencing 13th November, 2015 at 19, Maye Street, Sabo, Yaba.
- **Billings Ovulation Method of Natural Family Planning** (one Saturday a month for 7 months) commencing 5th December, 2015.
- **Marriage Theology and Lived Experience (Part Time) Courses:**
Yaba Week day Part Time (one Tuesday a month for 10 months) begins 2nd February, 2016.
Week end Part Time (One Saturday a month for 10 months) begins 6th February, 2016.
Holy Family Parish, Festac (one Tuesday a month for 10 months) commencing 9th February, 2016.
- **Canon Law Course for Laity** (one Friday a month for 10 months) commencing 19th February, 2016.

Cost: 3,500 per month (including tea break and lunch). **Time:** 10am-4pm.

Venue: Church and Society Building, 19 Maye Street, off Commercial Avenue, Sabo, Yaba, Lagos. For interested individuals who wish to be trained to work in the area of marriage, family and human life as facilitators, counsellors or social workers should call 08033804494 or 08028489999 for more information.

o. Catholic Faith Family Competition:

As you already know the Catholic Faith Family Competition has been inaugurated by the Archbishop. In keeping with the rules and regulations of the competition and to ensure its success

- Catechists are to collaborate with the Knight of St. John International and their Parish Priest to sensitize and awaken the interest of parishioners in the faith family project by ensuring that they receive regular and adequate information.
- They are to arrange the curriculum for study, in such a way that it is covered by the end of March 2016.
- Also ensure Families active involvement and participation of families in the competition.

Call Catechetics / Religious Education Department for Clarifications on **08066224284** and **08033574050**

k. Antioch Pastoral Institute: Application for admission into Antioch Pastoral institute for the 2016/2017 session has commenced. Admission is open to persons desiring to be trained as Evangelizers, Catechists and Catechism Teachers. You are also qualified to apply, if you are a Lay Liturgical Minister, a Parish office staff, a Religious Sister, or Individual who wishes to refresh, update and upgrade their knowledge of Catholic faith and morals. If you do not belong to any of these categories but desire to be trained as a Pastoral agent, please feel free to apply.

The current session will operate from two centres: Ikeja Region and Lagos / Lekki regions. Forms are obtainable at ₦ **500.00** only from Catechetics /Religious Education Department Archdiocese of Lagos, 19, Maye Street, Yaba, Lagos

p. PRIESTLY ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY: We congratulate, rejoice with and request your prayers for the following confreres, whose Sacerdotal Ordination anniversaries occur this month: Anthony Cardinal Okogie, Monsignor Patrick Somide, Christopher Boyo, Bernard Okodua, Philip Hoteyin, Francis Ogunmodede, Gabriel Osu, Frs. Christopher Chindo, Benjamin Bello, Jerome Akinyemi, Michael Adebayo, Andrew O’Sullivan, Michael Umoh, Lawrence Eze, Francis Opara, Gabriel Iheanacho, Felix Onomeghie, Ihekwoaba Paul Miki, Eugene Oguzie, AmechiUgwu, Justin Obuka, Agor Paschal, Joseph Anyanwu, Wilfred Nwachukwu, Gasper Olanrewaju, Anthony Aderibigbe, Paul Anyasi, Innocent Chiamaka, Francis Ike, and Augustine Okhueigbe. Others are; George Anubuike, Augustine Ikuomola, John Okoro, Charles Orekoya, Emmanuel Ayeni, Anthony Godonu, Simeon Irabor, Martin Iwueze, Longinus Ogbede, Anthony Orioha, Stephen Akinsowon, John-Paul Ale, Damian Alozie, Raymond Anoliefo, Melvis Mayaki, Hyginus Nwanze, Eric Onyeoziri, Abatan Peter, Philip Sosu-Mobee, Anthony Nwosu, Gabriel Odunaya, Paul Adekoya, Robert Oji, John Nutayi, Philip Uchendu, Anthony Okoro, Michael Omughele, Joseph Nwokeforo, Paul Amenaghawon, Houesou Leon, Bankole Vincent , Onuoha Dominic, Peter Azagba and Ugochukwu Collins. May God grant them lasting joy and the grace of final perseverance. *Ad multo sannos!*

(Signed)

+ Alfred Adewale Martins
Archbishop, Metropolitan See of Lagos