



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF LAGOS

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Monthly Bulletin /Circular **DECEMBER, 2018** /No. 075

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 DECEMBER:** We thank the Lord for preserving our lives to the last month of the year 2018. The month of December is a month of expectation, joy and celebration. It comprises the Seasons of **Advent** during which we celebrate **the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception** and **Christmas** during which we celebrate not only the birth of Christ but also the Holy Family of Nazareth. The month is one of stock-taking, self-evaluation and thanksgiving to God. 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. Christmastide begins with the First Vespers (Evening Prayer) of Christmas on December 24th and ends on the Sunday after Epiphany.

The Christmas Season expresses the boundless love of God; a love that heralds hope, inaugurates peace, engenders faith, and establishes the triumph of justice. 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. **Concerning the Formation of New Parish Pastoral, Laity and Finance Councils:** The Archdiocesan Parish Guidelines for **Parish Pastoral, Laity and Finance Councils** came into effect on November 29, 2015 (First Sunday of Advent) with the inauguration of the above Councils in all Parishes of the Archdiocese. The tenure of the Councils was set for three years, to end by November, 2018. In line with this, preparations for the inauguration of new councils should be well on the way by now.

The Timetable for the constitution of new Parish Pastoral, Laity and Finance Councils was sent in a Special Circular of 18th September 2018. By that schedule all the Councils **MUST** be inaugurated on **December 2, 2018** (First Sunday of Advent) **for a four-year non-renewable tenure**. Parish Priest should kindly take note and ensure strict compliance.

Parish priests should also take note of the Special Circular in November with which we made clarifications concerning tenures of members of the Executive of Associations of the lay faithful vis-à-vis their membership of the Parish Councils in order to avoid the confusion expressed by some

3. Leadership Training for Priests: This to restate that the Archdiocese is organizing a Leadership training for **all Priests** working in the Archdiocese. It is being facilitated by some of the staff of Lagos Business School as well as other professionals within the Archdiocese. The aim of the training is to better equip priests to carry out their responsibilities as pastors. The trainings would take place in the four Regions of the Archdiocese at places that would be communicated by the Episcopal Vicars. We expect that the Deans will collaborate with the Episcopal Vicars in order to choose the priests who will be in the groups of twenty-five each that will participate and in the choice of the locations within the Regions. **The dates for the first Batch of 25 Priests are as follows:**

Module 1 - January 30 and 31 2019

Module 2 - February 27 and 28

Module 3 - March 27 and 28

4. Prayer for Nigeria: a. Since August 2018 we began praying for Nigeria in the Archdiocese of Lagos as a follow-up to the procession that we held in May 2018 concerning the situation of insecurity in our nation. The directive was expressed as follows:

To this effect, we hereby direct that all Priests, Religious and Lay faithful of our Archdiocese should gather together in their different Parishes for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, the Rosary and other prayers between 5pm and 6pm on the last Sunday of every month till further notice. We hereby reiterate that the directive remains in force till further notice.

We wish to encourage individuals and families and families to keep up with the habit of praying the rosary daily for the nation and for our individual intentions as we did in the month of October. We know that the Rosary has always been an effective weapon in moments of difficulty and in the fight against all forms of evil. We pray that by the intercession of our Blessed Mother the will of the Lord for the welfare and good of His people will not be subverted.

5. Distribution of Holy Communion: As we reiterate the regulation on the distribution of the Holy Communion, we continue to call the attention of all priests to the Guidelines for Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion which was published recently. Wherever there is the need (we know that there is need in many parishes) priests should take advantage of the regulations in the Guidelines to get properly appointed Extraordinary ministers to assist in this important ministry.

6. In the last couple of monthly circulars, we have called attention to the following items: **The Use of Vernacular during Masses; 6-Month Mandatory Preparation for Marriage; Mass Stipend and Stole Fees.** We would like to ask that reference should be made to the circulars in order to keep the matters in mind for necessary action.

7. Concerning Priests who claim to have authorization of the Archbishop for Private Ministries: Please refer to the January 2017 Circular in which we called attention of all Priests and faithful in the Archdiocese to the menace of private ministries in and around the Parishes as well as in the homes of Parishioners. We are beginning to have incidents now of priests coming from outside the Archdiocese who claim to have the authorization of the Archbishop to carry out activities that our particular laws do not permit. We expect that our priests who are faced with such claims should request for the letter giving the authorization claimed. Such incidents should be brought to the notice of the Deans and the Archbishop immediately.

8. Final Blessing at Masses with the Archbishop: we hereby call attention for the last time to the need for instructing the faithful on responses to the liturgical formula for the final blessing and dismissal at Masses celebrated by the Bishop. Those who may not have done needful should do so.

V: The Lord be with you

R: And with your spirit

V: May the name of the Lord be blessed

R: **Both now and forever**

V: Our help is in the name of the Lord

R: **Who made heaven and earth**

V: May almighty God bless you + Father + Son and + Holy Spirit

R: **Amen**

9. Scholarship for young people to go to 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.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

a. Advent Season: The Season of Advent is around the corner again. Advent starts the new Liturgical Year and can be seen as another opportunity to spiritually begin anew. There are particular themes in the Liturgy throughout Advent: a spirit of waiting, of conversion and joyful expectation and longing for the coming of the Messiah. We sing the song "O Come, O come, Emmanuel" with eager hope and longing, for our messiah who came to us first as a child in the manger and who has promised to come again. Let us therefore avail ourselves the opportunity that Advent provides to renew our relationship with the King who is to come so that we can receive the graces of Christmas.

b. Archdiocesan Advent Pilgrimage: The Advent Pilgrimage for this year will be hosted by the Ikeja Region and to be organized by Ipaja Deanery.

Date: 15th December, 2018

Venue: Abesan Mini Stadium, School Junction Bus Stop, Abesan (LSDPC) Estate behind St. Ferdinand Catholic Church, Boys Town, Ipaja

Time: Pilgrimage starts with Rosary procession from St. Ferdinand Catholic Church, Ipaja at 8:30am to the venue.

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 in large numbers

In view of the above, we expect that **all Parish Priests/Priests-in-Charge should sensitize their parishioners using two Sundays of December 2nd and 9th. We expect also that the information would not just be published in the Bulletins but that Priests would call attention to it at each of the Masses on the two Sundays before the 15th December.**

c. Annual Priests Retreat: The Annual Retreat of Priests in the Archdiocese for this year has been scheduled to hold from 3rd December to 14th of December, 2018.

First Batch: 3rd to 7th December, 2018

Second Batch: 10th to 14th, December, 2018.

Venue: Eucharistic Heart of Jesus' Domus Fidei, Ikeja, Lagos.

To this end, all priests are requested to promptly fulfill their financial obligations through the Priests Welfare Committee, **Rev Fr Stephen Akinsowon.**

Please note that the retreat is obligatory and NOT optional. Hence, **ALL** must attend.

d. Priests' and Religious Get-Together 2018: This has been scheduled to hold on Thursday, **27th December, 2018.** Venue: **St. Agnes Catholic Church, Maryland.** Kindly endeavour to be present.

e. Archdiocesan Christmas Carols: The Lagos Archdiocesan Music Commission (LAMCOM) in collaboration with Holy Cross Cathedral presents the Lagos Archdiocesan Christmas Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols. This event will feature the Holy Cross Cathedral Choir, the Archdiocesan Choir, the Ikeja, Badagry, Lagos, and Lekki Regional Choirs, the Musica Casa Chorale and the Cecilian Diploma Chorale.

Chief Host: Most Rev. Alfred Adewale Martins, Archbishop of Lagos.

Date: Sunday, 23rd December, 2018

Venue: Holy Cross Cathedral, Lagos

Time: 3pm. All are cordially invited.

Let's celebrate the birth of Christ in a musical grand style.

f. 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 10th and 12th January, 2019. The venue for the orientation is **Domus Fidei, Eucharistic Heart of Jesus Generalate, Ikeja, Lagos.**

We notice that many of those who were supposed to have participated in the 2018 programme absented themselves. **All the priests posted to the Archdiocese but have not participated, no matter how long they may have been in the Archdiocese are expected to participate next year. We emphasize it again that only new priests and priests newly posted to the Archdiocese who duly take part in the orientation programme can be appointed Parish Priests in the Archdiocese. Everyone concerned should note that participation in this orientation programme is mandatory.**

g. Priests' Annual Leave-Roster: Priests are to submit months of preference for their annual leave for next year, 2019 to the Priests' Welfare Committee not later than January, 2019.

h. 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: December 8th, 2018

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.

i. Archdiocesan Novena for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception: there shall be a novena in preparation for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception at the Archdiocesan Marian Shrine, Maryland:

Date: 29th November- 7th December, 2018.

Solemnity: December 8th, 2018.

Theme: Mary Intercedes; Jesus Provides (John 2:5)

Venue: Archdiocesan Marian Shrine, Maryland.

Time: 4:30 pm daily

j. Admission into the Catholic Secondary Schools

This is to inform everyone that admission into JSS 1 for the 2019/2020 academic session in all Catholic Secondary Schools in the Archdiocese is in progress. The Entrance Examination comes up on 9th 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.

k. 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 on 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.

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

The above is a media training institute in Nigeria 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 Journalist and 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.

m. 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

Venue: St. Dominic's Parish School Block, Herbert Macaulay Road, Yaba

Holds: Second Saturday of every month- starting from **February 2019**

Forms: Obtainable from Religious Education Department, 19 Maye Street Off Montgomery (opp Lebanese School) Yaba @ #1,000.00

For contacts and enquiry call: 08033574050, 08035040118 or 08066224284

n. 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.

o. Quarterly Returns Collections: Please be reminded that the returns from the following Special Collections are to be made in the fourth quarter of the year: **Catholic Teachers Day- 07/10/2018, AUI Collection- 14/10/2018, 11/11/2018, and 09/12/2018, Mission Sunday- 21/10/2018, Catechetical collection- 07/10/2018, C.I.W.A-02/12/2018, Health Collection- 09/12/2018, Laity-30/12/2018 and VUNA Collection.**

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 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 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 returns with cheques, we request that you 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.

11. 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, Msgri. Christopher Boyo, Bernard Okodua, Philip Hoteyin, Francis Ogunmodede, Gabriel Osu, Frs. Christopher Chindo, Benjamin Bello, Jerome Akinyemi, Michael Adebayo, Andrew O'Sullivan, Michael Umoh, 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 Okhueleigbe. 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, Hoesou Leon, Bankole Vincent, Onuoha Dominic, Peter Azagba and Ugochukwu Collins. May God grant them lasting joy and the grace of final perseverance. *Ad multos annos!*

(Signed)

+ Alfred Adewale Martins
Archbishop, Metropolitan See of Lagos