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

Dear Msgri./Frs., Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

Concerning the Implementation of new Deanery Level Pastoral, Laity and Finance Guidelines

1. Archdiocesan Parish Guidelines

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.

The Guidelines were reviewed and updated in the light of the experience gained in the first three years of their operation. Then, new Parish Pastoral, Laity and Finance Councils were constituted and inaugurated on December 2, 2018 (First Sunday of Advent) for a four-year non-renewable tenure.

2. Implementation of Deanery Level Guidelines

In 2017, work started with a view to streamlining and aligning the Deanery Organizations, practices and activities with the new Archdiocesan Parish Guidelines.

A Seminar was held at St Leo's Ikeja on March 10, 2018 for all the Deans and Deanery representatives to present to them the draft of the Deanery Pastoral Council and Deanery Laity Council guidelines; to discuss with them and obtain their inputs into the same for a more implementable final document.
These drafts were further reviewed at the seminars for the entire Clergy at Regional level held on June 27, 2018 and for the Lay Faithful representatives, at Regional level, on July 7, 2018.

All the comments and observations from the above seminars led to a thorough review and update of the Deanery level Guidelines. The updated documents, including Deanery Finance Guidelines (because there is no Deanery Finance Council) were made available to all the Deans for further comments (if any) on or before October 16, 2019. A few observations came in and have been addressed. Therefore, the final Deanery Pastoral Council, Deanery Laity Council and Deanery Finance Guidelines will be available to all the Deans shortly for implementation.

3. Implementation Strategy

The concept, language and practice of the new Archdiocesan Parish Guidelines have gradually become familiar to parishioners across the Archdiocese over the past five years. We are, therefore, at the point where the Dean of every Deanery will now have the sole responsibility for implementing the Deanery level Guidelines in his Deanery.

However, the following approach is recommended to the Deans:

A) Organize a meeting/training session for all the Vice Chairpersons and Secretaries of the PPCs and the Presidents and Secretaries of the PLCs of all the Parishes in your Deanery on any Saturday between now and the end of December, 2019. A three to four hour session should be sufficient. Any Deanery that requires support/assistance should consult the Chancery.

B) All the Deanery level organizations should re-constitute their executives as their tenures expire in the course of the new year 2020 in accordance with the provisions of the Deanery Guidelines.

C) A template has been provided as a guide for the re-constitution of the Deanery level organizations. The example is the Community Building Pastoral Committee, and it is assumed that the Deanery has ten parishes (or ease of handling).
4. Effective Date of new Deanery Level Guidelines

The new Archdiocesan Deanery Level Guidelines take effect from December 1, 2019 (First Sunday of Advent), that is, exactly one year after the reviewed Parish Level Guidelines took effect.

While we thank you priests and Lay faithful for your collaboration in this regard, we continue to encourage and urge you not to flag in zeal so that together, we can create a vibrant and engaging worshipping community in our Archdiocese.

Signed

+ Alfred Adewale Martins
Archbishop, Metropolitan See of Lagos