



CHURCH OF NIGERIA

(Anglican Communion)

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PASTORAL LETTER FROM THE STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING OF THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA (ANGLICAN COMMUNION) HELD FROM MONDAY 21ST TO FRIDAY 25TH FEBRUARY, 2022 AT THE ALL SAINTS CATHEDRAL, RUMUOKWURUSI AND ST. ANDREW'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, RUMUOBIOKANI DEANERY, EVO DIOCESE, OBIO, RIVERS STATE.

Dearly Beloved in Christ,

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Grace to you and peace from God our Father. We bring you warm Christian greetings from the Standing Committee Meeting of the Church of Nigeria which held at All Saints' Cathedral, Rumuokwurusi and St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Rumuobiokani Deanery, Evo Diocese, Obio, Rivers State. We are profoundly grateful to the Bishop, Clergy, good people of the Diocese of Evo, the Archbishop and the entire Province of Niger Delta, as well as the Government and the good people of Rivers state, for a generous hospitality and Christian love practically demonstrated during our meeting. May the Lord bless His Church and the entire State.

We reflected on the theme; **“Christian's Dual Citizenship and Responsibilities” - Matthew 22:20-22**. We give thanks to God for the immense contributions Anglican members all over the country have been making to the life of our society, since the advent of Christianity. The modern challenges call us, once again, never to relent but to renew our commitment as Christians to making our society better than it has been, as we are called to be the light in the world. Our Lord, Jesus Christ, rightly admonishes, *'Let your light so shine among men that they may see your good works and glorify your Heavenly Father'*. (Matthew 5:16).

In spite of the situation of things in our country about which so many of us have continued to complain, we have a challenge to ensure that we play our role within the society, especially, knowing that the earth belongs to the Lord and the fullness thereof (Psalm 24:1). While we are living here on earth as pilgrims and strangers, we should not lose sight of the fact that our citizenship is of heaven. It behoves on

us, therefore, to live as faithful ambassadors of Christ here on earth and as citizens of heaven. Our time here must be spent in the fear of the Lord and in obedience to His will.

The imperative of being responsible citizens of heaven here on earth calls for diligent engagement with the present world in such a way that God may be glorified. Hence, Jesus says, "*Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to Him*" (Matt.22:20-22). This is not a calling to abandon our world to Caesar as the world actually belongs to God; it is rather a calling to play constructive role under our earthly administrators without failing God the creator of the universe.

We must ensure that we are guided by our goal of the heavenly home as we strive to remain responsible members of our present society. It is in living out the demands of our heavenly citizenship that we can make the desired impact here on earth.

I ask you, therefore, to live as responsible members of our earthly society, paying your taxes, and making contributions to the betterment of the society. Politics offers a context for the governance of the land. It is important that we are involved in the electoral process, by registering for, and obtaining our Permanent Voters Card (PVC), going to vote, and actively advocating for good things that will be beneficial to our people. Partisan politics should not be avoided. We request of you, beloved people of God, to be actively and responsibly involved in godly politics without which our society becomes poorer, failing in God's purpose and plan.

By fulfilling our responsibilities, we are mindful of our accountability to God, who truly is the owner of the universe. Thus, while living here we secure our citizenship of heaven without abandoning our earthly responsibilities.

People of God, we continue to give thanks to God, on your behalf, for your constant partnership in the Gospel and for your commitment to our Church. Our calling to this joint commission to reach the world must be sustained in spite of the present challenges. We appreciate the endeavours of CNMS and we do encourage Diocesesto support and partner with them. Another edition of our St. Matthias' Day Collection has just come up and we are grateful to you all for constantly giving towards the work of God. I encourage you never to lose confidence in our Lord's goodness; know that He is faithful and will continue to keep and bless you.


Our country has continued to encounter various challenges including the recent scarcity of petrol. We can only trust God, as we pray for grace and guidance, for our Government to be able to manage our resources more effectively for the benefit of all. Regrettably, ritual killings and drug abuse, especially, amongst the youth have become prevalent; this is not unconnected with ungodly and inordinate ambition for the acquisition of wealth. Our youth should learn that hard work is a legitimate means to prosperity. So we call on parents, guardians, the Church, schools and Government agencies to rise up in our common interest to combat and put an end to this menace. I am delighted that the Joshua Generation Conference has come to add to the resources of our Church. This Conference has great potential to bless our youth. The next edition is coming up soon after Easter, please support this financially and spiritually as we encourage all our youths to register en masse and attend the Conference

Finally, we gratefully return all thanks to God for blessing us with His presence in Evo Diocese, and we greatly appreciate the labours of both the leadership and the followership of the good people of Niger Delta Province and the Diocese of Evo. As we continue to ponder on the theme of our Standing Committee Meeting this year, let us do so daily, reflecting on the hymn written by Isaac Watts (1719).

*Jesus shall reign where'er the sun,
doth his successive journeys run:
His Kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moon shall wax and wane no more.
People and realms of every tongue,
Dwell on His love with sweetest song;
And infant voices shall proclaim,
their early blessings on His Name.
Blessings abound where'er he reigns;
The prisoner leaps to lose his chains;
The weary find eternal rest,
and all the sons of want are blest....*

May the Grace of God be with you all.

Yours in the service of Christ,



The Most Rev'd Dr. Henry Chukwudum Ndukuba.
Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of All Nigeria