



The Tenth Synod Address (2022)  
The Episcopal Address to The Anglican Diocese of the West  
(USA, Canada, and the Persian Gulf)

**“The Mandate, Message, and Method of  
Evangelism and Discipleship”**

By

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## **I. Welcome to Synod –**

“The Church exists by mission, just as fire exists by burning.” Dr. Emil Bruner

We welcome all the Laity, Clergy, and Suffragan Bishops of this Diocese, and our guests, especially our visiting Bishops, and those who are with us in spirit but cannot be physically present due to distance. We have received your congratulatory messages with gratitude. You all make me proud, under God, to serve as your Bishop. I am also delighted to welcome the Dean of the Church of Nigeria, The Most Rev'd Dr. Ali Buba Lamido. He is also the Diocesan Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Wusasa and the Archbishop of the Province of Kaduna in the Church of Nigeria. Archbishop Lamido is a very good friend of mine and of this Diocese. He will be preaching this evening at the service commemorating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my consecration as a Bishop in the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). Please join me in welcoming him. And I must not neglect to welcome our plenary speaker, The Venerable Michael Kelshaw. Michael is the Rector of Trinity at the Marketplace in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and Regional Archdeacon for the New Mexico Archdeaconry of The Anglican Diocese of the West. Thank you, Michael, for agreeing to speak at this Synod. Michael's father, Bishop Terence Kelshaw, was my Diocesan Bishop when I was a priest in the Episcopal Church (USA). He was a godly, Bible-believing Bishop, and when he retired, I knew my days in the Episcopal Church were numbered. And, to the glory of God, that was precisely the case!

It is most appropriate to express our gratitude to the Archbishop, Metropolitan, and Primate of our Church, The Most Rev'd Dr. Henry C. Ndukuba, and to his wife, Mama Angela Ndukuba, for their unceasing prayers and support. We thank everyone who made it possible for us to conduct this Synod and celebrate the 10th anniversary of my consecration and enthronement as the Diocesan Bishop of this Diocese. Special thanks to the Clergy, the Diocesan Board members, parishes, individuals, my noble Knights/Dames, and Ladies (see Appendix 8) for your financial giving to the Diocese. My deep appreciation and profound gratitude goes to all the members of the Synod and Anniversary Committees, especially Sir Forster Duru for going the extra mile, Sir Chidi Chiege, Sir Ike Oraedu (chair of the Anniversary Committee), Sir Chuks Onubogu, Sir Paul Chukwujekwu, Sir Charles Onuogu, Lady Dr. Bernadette Iguh, Sir Andrew Ikele, Sir Henry Eke, Sir David Branch, Engineer Frank Akoh, Mr. Oladimeji Adeleja, Canon Folusho Kolawole, Canon Rob Goodman, Venerable Tosin Onaseso, Venerable Don Armstrong, Venerable Isaac Rehberg, Venerable Chukwuma Ubadinobi, Venerable Layne Hansen, Venerable Ugochukwu Okoroafor, Bishop Scott Seely (Chair of the Synod Committee), and Bishop Celestine Ironna for your commitment and hard

work to make these events a reality. I want to commend ALL the laymen and women of every parish in this Diocese who are peacemakers and who labor much for the good and growth of God's church and our Diocese. I make special mention of Mr. Benjamin & Barrister Mrs. Abiodun Olayemi for their sacrificial labor at Our Savior Anglican Church in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. You have all been blessings to me, and it has been a joy to work with all of you this past year.

Many of you have sacrificed personal and family time to ensure that our ministry in The Anglican Diocese of the West is both faithful and effective. You have been of tremendous help to me personally. Mama Lilian and I, along with our children, are grateful to EVERYONE who has contributed financially to our 10<sup>th</sup> consecration anniversary celebration, and to the Diocese for its support, prayers, love, and partnership with me in the ministry of the gospel for the past ten years. I thank God for you! The Lord knows who you are, and I am convinced that He will bless you and replenish you abundantly in His time and in his own unique manner, in Jesus's name. Amen!

I would be remiss if I did not express my deep appreciation to my dear wife, Mama West, and to our children for their patience and faithful support over the years. Above all, I am very grateful to God for His many blessings on our Diocese and for His grace and mercies which have enabled us to gather together for this Synod of The Anglican Diocese of the West.

### **New Clergy, New Congregations, and New Legal Officers –**

We heartily welcome our new clergy and congregations:

#### A. Canada –

The Venerable Temidayo Fasan, Rector of Anglican Church of the Trinity, New Westminster, British Columbia, Canada, and Regional Archdeacon for Cornerstone Archdeaconry, Canada;

The Venerable Christopher Ogundare, Assisting Priest at Anglican Church of the Trinity, New Westminster, British Columbia, Canada;

The Rev'd Canon Adewale Makinde, Rector of the Anglican Church of the Advent, Calgary, Alberta, Canada;

The Rev'd Jeremiah Aderemi, Rector of All Souls Anglican Church, Calgary, Alberta, Canada; and

The Rev'd Godwin Babajide Olutimi, Deacon-in-Charge of the Anglican Church of the Divine Shepherd, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

B. USA –

The Venerable Elias Yinka Eniade, Rector of The New Evangelical Anglican Church, Fulton, Missouri, The Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd, St. Louis, Missouri, and Regional Archdeacon for the Missouri Archdeaconry;

The Venerable Dr. Chris Odoemana, Rector of Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Gardena, California, Regional Archdeacon for the Arizona & Nevada Archdeaconry, and Archdeacon Missioner for the Pacific Region;

The Venerable Innocent Nwogwugwu, Rector of St. Peter's Anglican Church, Dallas, Texas, and Regional Archdeacon for the South Dallas Archdeaconry;

The Venerable Cyprian Okere, Rector of Christ Ambassadors Anglican Church, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and Regional Archdeacon for the Oklahoma Archdeaconry;

The Venerable Gus Calvo from Fort Smith, Arkansas, Archdeacon for Mission Outreach/Societal Engagement;

The Venerable Elias Mburu, Rector of Christ the King Anglican Church, Kent, Washington, Regional Archdeacon for the Northwest Archdeaconry and Canon for our Kenyan Mission;

The Rev'd Innocent Obinwane Umunna, Rector of  
Anglican Church of the Resurrection, Antioch, California;  
and

The Rev'd Deacon Daniel Clark, St. Benedict Anglican  
Church, San Antonio, Texas.

We welcome the following new church plants:

1. All Saints Anglican Church, Tampa, Florida, by Venerable Dr. Charles Tashie;
2. Anglican Church of the Resurrection, Antioch, California, by Rev'd Innocent Umunna;
3. New Testament Anglican Church, Richmond, California, by Rev'd Joe Eze;
4. Church of the Redeemer, New Braunfels, Texas, by Bishop Scott Seely (Three Streams Anglican Church, San Antonio, Texas);
5. St. John's Anglican Church, New Orleans, Louisiana, by Venerable Dr. Shola Falodun and Venerable Solomon Kanu (Louisiana/Mississippi Archdeaconry); and
6. Anglican Church of the Epiphany, Tennessee, by Venerable Ishmael Boms.

The Regional Archdeacon for Northern California, Venerable Aaron Ajoku, is exploring the possibility of a church plant in Modesto, California, led by Rev'd Canon Progress Okoroafor.

The mission of every local church is to be a training ground for disciples to become true worshippers of God, spiritually mature, and prepared for service and evangelistic ministry within and outside the church. Those trained in this manner will be equipped, by God's grace, to reach the world for Christ with zeal and knowledge.

We thank God for our new Priests:

The Rev'd Augustine Igbonagwam, The Rev'd Sunday Ikenador, The Rev'd John Mack, and The Rev'd Adam Wade;

... and Deacons:

The Rev'd Godwin Babajide Olutimi, The Rev'd Jesse Kibe, The Rev'd Joseph Nderitu, The Rev'd Michael Aveledi, The Rev'd Dr. Valentin Ekiaka, and The Rev'd Alain Ikouba.

It is my pleasure to introduce Barrister Kene Ilochonwu, the newest Legal Advisor for The Anglican Diocese of the West in Canada. He lives in Airdrie, Alberta, Canada, and is a member of Our Savior Anglican Church, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. We congratulate him on his appointment as Queen's Counsel (QC – Her Majesty's Counsel learned in the law, the Canadian equivalent of SAN in Nigeria). We appreciate all our Diocesan Officers and Staff, especially those who work with me on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis: Chancellor Judge Job Serebrov, Deputy Chancellor Sir Solomon Kanu, Esq., Mr. David Avren, Esq. (Chief Legal Officer for Canada), Mr. Christopher Lee Milner, Esq. (Chancellor Emeritus), Sir Charles Napier (Diocesan Treasurer), Mama West (Lilian Orji), Venerable Dr. Myles Calvin (Executive Archdeacon), Venerable Don Armstrong (Canon to the Ordinary), Venerable Chukwuma Obadinobi (Registered Agent for the Diocese), Venerable Layne Hansen, Lady Dr. Obiageli Obijiofor (Diocesan Medical Officer), JoAnn Casper, Lea Magruder, and Gabriella Cerrito for the excellent work they do for the Diocese.

## **II. Gratitude for Former Chancellor Christopher Milner and Welcome for New Chancellor Judge Job Serebrov –**

This Synod is a great opportunity to recognize our former Diocesan Chancellor, Christopher Lee Milner, Esq., who stepped down from the office of Chancellor on February 1, 2022. On behalf of my wife and the Diocese, I wish to express our profound gratitude to Mr. Milner and to his wife, Candyce, for his faithful, sacrificial, and generous service as our Diocesan Chancellor these many years. And we thank him for agreeing to continue serving on our Diocesan Legal team in a new capacity. May the Lord's blessing continue to abound in Candyce's and his lives. We are pleased that Mr. Milner has agreed to continue his service as a Diocesan Legal Advisor (and as Legal Consultant to the new Chancellor), Diocesan Registrar (custodian of records), and Canonical Investigator, and that he is willing to oversee ecclesiastical

disciplinary proceedings if and as requested by the new Chancellor of the Diocese. It is my pleasure to honor Mr. Milner with the Diocesan Medal and Commendation. Thank you very much, Chancellor Emeritus!

It is also my pleasure now to introduce our new Diocesan Chancellor, Venerable Judge Job Serebrov, whose appointment as Chancellor became effective on February 1, 2022.

Venerable Judge Serebrov is an Anglican priest who currently serves as Vice Chancellor for the Jurisdiction of the Armed Forces and Chaplaincy (“JAFC”). He is the founder and CEO of the Institute for Jewish-Christian Studies and is a Board member and General Counsel for Our Faith Under Fire and Anglicans in Action (which deal with Anglican national and international governmental affairs).

On the secular side, Judge Serebrov has been an attorney for more than thirty years, an Appellate Judge for the San Manuel Tribe for more than eleven years and has served as Presiding Appellate Judge for the San Manuel Tribe for more than six years. He held an appointment under President George W. Bush as a Deputy Undersecretary/Deputy General Counsel at the U.S. Department of Agriculture and held appointments under Arkansas Governors Mike Huckabee (as Deputy Director of the Department of Environmental Quality) and Asa Hutchinson (as Associate Deputy Director of the Department of Health and Human Services). Judge Serebrov also served as a Law Clerk for Chief Judge Lavenski R. Smith of the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit.

Judge Serebrov also taught administrative law in the Master of Law International Food Law program at Michigan State University College of Law and served as Director of the Office of International Development at Louisiana State University. Please join me in welcoming him and his family to our Diocese.

Judge Serebrov has earned eight graduate theology and law degrees. He is married to Mari Serebrov, who serves as Executive Regulatory Editor for Bioworld, an international biopharma daily online publication, and is also an author. The Serebrovs have two adult children, seven grandchildren, a great granddaughter on the way, and a five-year old Komondor dog.

### **III. The Mandate, Message, and Method of Evangelism and Discipleship –**

(Texts: Matthew 28:16-20; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21; Romans 1:1-7; 1 Corinthians 15:1-5; Luke 24:44-49; Acts 20:17-32; Ephesians 2:1-10)

“The central mission of the church is to point people continually to the Messiah: he alone fully reveals the love of the Father and pours out his Spirit on us. The goal of all our good efforts is to draw people to the embrace of the triune God, not to serve as a replacement for him. All the gifts we exercise must ultimately point back to the true Giver.” Dr. Kelly Kapic

“Christianity is a story of how the righteous king has landed and is calling us to take part in a great campaign of sabotage.” C.S. Lewis

“It is the whole job of the whole church to preach the whole gospel to the whole world.” C.S. Spurgeon.

“A Church that knows its Lord and is possessed by its gospel cannot but propagate creatively the life that it has found. A Christian who is taking his faith seriously cannot but evangelize. Now the first axiom of effective evangelism is that the evangelist must be sure of his message. Any haziness or hesitation there is fatal.” Dr. James Stewart

The theme of this Synod is the Great Commission. Therefore, I shall focus our attention on the topic of this address: **The Mandate, Message, and Method of Evangelism & Discipleship.**

Let us pray:

Give us grace, O Lord, to answer readily the call of our Savior Jesus Christ and proclaim to all people the Good News of his salvation, that we and the whole world may perceive the glory of his marvelous works; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.* (Collect for Third Sunday after the Epiphany)

**A. The Mandate** (Matthew 28:16-20) –

Several years ago, a fairly well-known educator, author, and management consultant, Peter Drucker, said that there are at least three questions an organization that wants to succeed must answer clearly and satisfactorily. Here are the questions: First – What business are we in? Second – Do we have a passion for it? Third – Is it relevant? The answers to those questions, he stated, would largely determine the structure, effectiveness, growth, stability, viability, and future of that organization.

When we apply the first question to the Christian church of which our Diocese is a member, the answer is obvious. Here it is – we are in the business of worshipping God in spirit and truth; edifying the church through preaching the gospel, teaching God’s word, prayer, and fellowship; evangelizing and discipling others; and pursuing outreach in our communities and other places to help those in need (material, emotional, etc.) with church members as our primary focus, and then those who are outside the church.

At this Synod, we will focus attention on the third business (or function) of the Church – evangelism and discipleship. Our primary mission in the world is to make disciples of all nations for Christ through evangelism and discipleship. Dr. Kelly Kapic made a similar point when he noted,

“The central mission of the church is to point people continually to the Messiah: he alone fully reveals the love of the Father and pours out his Spirit on us. The goal of all our good efforts is to draw people to the embrace of the triune God, not to serve as a replacement for him. All the gifts we exercise must ultimately point back to the true Giver.”

This is the corporate responsibility of the church as well as the individual responsibility of anyone who considers himself or herself a Christian, irrespective of his or her denominational ethos, bias, or temperament.

Let us read the Great Commission in Matthew 28:16-20:

<sup>16</sup>Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. <sup>17</sup>And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. <sup>18</sup>And Jesus came and said to them, “All

authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

I want you to notice six things in this passage.

1. First, Discipleship/Evangelism is the divine command of our risen King, Jesus Christ (vv.17-19). Matthew alludes to Jesus’s divine status in v.17 (“... they worshipped him ...”) and Jesus draws our attention to his divine and kingly authority in v.18. He rules all people and all things in heaven and on earth. On that basis he then issues the imperative in v.19 – “[as you go,] MAKE Disciples of all nations ...” so that they can enter his kingdom and serve him as their rightful king. That is what C.S. Lewis meant when he wrote that “Christianity is a story of how the righteous king has landed and is calling us to take part in a great campaign of sabotage.” So, Evangelism is about bringing people to bow at the feet of the rightful king, it’s not just about justification by faith (in the present) and glorification (when we die). No, discipleship is about bringing people into the kingdom of Christ and helping them learn to submit to the King of kings and Lord of lords – Jesus Christ of Nazareth. The king has commanded and commissioned us to go and make disciples for him. We need to obey him. In the 1800’s Charles Spurgeon reminded the church, “It is the whole job of the whole church to preach the whole gospel to the whole world.” A century later the indomitable C.S. Lewis stated rather bluntly in these words:

“The Church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs. If they are not doing that, all the Cathedrals, clergy, sermons, even the Bible itself, are simply a waste of time.”

2. Second, Evangelism is not just a program but a way of life. Notice that v.19 says, in effect, “as you go.” As we go worshipping, fellowshiping, shopping, teaching, parenting, being a student, being with our friends, doing our business, Jesus commands us to make disciples of all people for Him: all nations,

ethnicities, races, gender, all ages, neighbors, enemies, friends, family, and colleagues. Tony Merida identifies five groups of people in almost everybody's network: vocational, familial, geographical, commercial, and recreational/relational. Discipleship is not a program but a lifestyle and should permeate everything we do and affect every relationship we have, wherever we find ourselves.

3. Third, we are to make disciples of ALL nations and ethnicities for Christ, not disciples for anyone else or anything else. Notice first that we are to reach ALL people and all ages and all sexes. There should be no room for phyletism or ethno-phyletism in our Diocese. What is phyletism? Phyletism is the doctrine or dogma that subtly practices and believes that a nationality should be served by its own independent ecclesiastical administration even on the territory of another church; it is an excessive emphasis on the principle of nationalism in the organization of church affairs; a policy which attaches greater importance to ethnic identity than to bonds of faith and worship; [originally] specifically the claim of the Bulgarian Church to jurisdiction over Bulgarian nationals in all parts of the world). Similarly, there should be no room for racism, tribalism, or elitism in the work of the gospel. This is why I have been clear and insistent that even though this Diocese is a Diocese in the Province of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), we are not a Diocese for Nigerians only. To the glory of God alone, I believe that The Anglican Diocese of the West is the most racially and tribally diverse Diocese in the Anglican Communion – and I love that! So, my friends, we are all together brothers in Christ, citizens of heaven, and missionaries in North America, set apart and empowered by the Holy Spirit to reach everyone with the saving and sanctifying gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Furthermore, we are NOT to make disciples for our nation, denomination, or Prayer Book. Rather, we are to make disciples for Christ whose lives are characterized by: faith in Christ alone for salvation, commitment to Christ as the Lord and master of their lives, love for Christ above all, willingness to deny themselves of all comfort and carry their crosses to follow Christ, willingness to give up everything and pay the cost of following him, commitment to obeying Christ and acknowledging him as King, and loving others as Christ has loved them. This is the kind of disciples we need to make: Christ's disciples, that is, disciples who look up to Christ for salvation

*and who act like Him.* The goal is not just to be saved from the wrath of God in an eternal Hell, but to be *like* Christ (Romans 8:29; Ephesians 4:13).

4. Fourth, we are to baptize disciples into the name of the Trinity (v.19). In The Book of Common Prayer, we note Article XXVII, titled “OF BAPTISM.” It states, “Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened, but it is also a sign of Regeneration or new Birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive Baptism rightly are grafted into the Church; the promises of forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed; Faith is confirmed, and Grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God. The Baptism of young Children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ.”  
Baptism is a sign and seal of regeneration by God (new life through death and resurrection imagery), God’s commitment to us, and our belonging to God and his Church. Baptism is a public sign and symbol of cleansing from sin through the blood of Christ (water = blood of Christ). It is a picture of our identification with and participation by faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus and of commitment to Christ. Baptism is the divine seal of incorporation and submission to the Trinity, and covenant relationship with the Trinity. Baptism is an important aspect of Christian discipleship indicating God’s mark on us as his own and the sign of our belonging to him.
  
5. Fifth, we must teach disciples to obey everything Jesus has commanded us (v.20a). This is the crux of discipleship and perhaps where the modern church has dropped the ball because of fear or self-interest. Dr. J.I. Packer wrote: “Anyone who is in a position of spiritual leadership who fails to teach the more demanding less comfortable ‘narrow gate’ and ‘rough roads’ side of discipleship becomes a false prophet.” This, I believe, is the problem with happy-clappy, cultural Christianity that continually harps about a prosperity gospel: happiness, health, and wealth for believers who have enough faith. Such a gospel cannot engender maturity in Christ – it is spurious and encourages selfishness and an overblown sense of entitlement. Dr. R.C. Sproul raised a similar point when he wrote, “The Christian who seeks a deeper experience of God by ignoring the hard sayings of Scripture gets nowhere. The full nourishment of the soul requires feeding on the whole counsel of God.” If your gospel presentation is

only about forgiveness, justification, glorification, and divine blessing of all sorts, you have missed the point of New Testament teaching on salvation. Reformed pastor and teacher Kevin DeYoung, in his book titled “The Hole in our Holiness,” writes:

“What does Jesus commission us to do in the Great Commission? You may have said, ‘He sends us into the world to evangelize.’ Or maybe you said, ‘He wants us to preach the gospel to the nations.’ Or perhaps you said something about making disciples. Those aren’t wrong answers. But do you recall Jesus’s precise instructions? ‘Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.’ (Matthew 28:19-20a). The word ‘observe’ means more than ‘take notice of.’ It means ‘obey.’ We aren’t asking the nations to look at Jesus’s commands like an interesting Rembrandt. We are teaching the nations to follow his commands. The Great Commission is about holiness. God wants the world to know Jesus, believe in Jesus, and obey Jesus. We don’t take the Great Commission seriously if we don’t help each other grow in obedience. And yet, how many of us usually think of holiness when we think of mission work? How easy it is to be content with leading people to make decisions for Christ instead of focusing on making disciples of Christ. Of course, this doesn’t mean we are merely trying to make good people who live like Jesus. The Great Commission would mean nothing and accomplish nothing were it not for the fact that the one who issued it has ‘all authority in heaven and on earth’ (Matthew 28: 18). It is only by trusting in him and being forgiven by his substitutionary sacrifice that we are even capable of walking in his ways. You can’t make good fruit grow from bad trees. The demands of Jesus cannot be separated from his person and work. Whatever holiness he requires is as the fruit of his redeeming work and for the display of his personal glory. But in all this necessary nuance, do not miss what many churches

have overlooked: Jesus expects obedience from his disciples. Passing on the imperatives of Christ is at the heart of the Great Commission.”

Jesus didn't tell us to teach Christians evangelical, biblical, and conservative theology only, but to teach them to 'obey' everything he has commanded!

Dr. James M. Boice noted,

“One of the most important universals in the Great Commission, particularly for our superficial age, is the command to teach those we have discipled. We're to teach them everything Christ commanded. Today we see what seems to be the opposite. Instead of striving to teach all Christ commanded, many try to eliminate as much of his teaching as possible, concentrating on an easily comprehended, unobjectionable 'core' of teaching. It is grace without judgment, love without justice, salvation without obedience, and triumph without suffering. The motivation of some of these reductionists may be good – to win as many people to Christ as possible. But the method is the world's, and the results (as a natural consequence) are the world's results. Disciples are not made by defective teaching. The world is not subjected to Christ's rule by demi-gospels. What teachings does today's church need to recover? Any brief listing of doctrines is inadequate. We must teach the entire Bible. Nevertheless, faithfulness to Christ must involve at least the following: a High View of Scripture, the Sovereignty of God, the Depravity of Man, the Grace of God, the Need for Good Works, and the Security of the Believer in Christ.”

A typical discipleship class will include lessons on how to become a Christian, the assurance of Salvation, Baptism, Bible Study, Prayer, living a Holy and Obedient life, the Church and Christian fellowship, knowing and doing God's Will, the Holy Spirit and his power, Evangelism, the Trinity, and more.

Dr. Boice further stated,

“In the Great Commission, Jesus commanded his disciples to make disciples of others. They were to lead others to faith through the preaching of the gospel, to bring them into the fellowship of the church through the initiatory rite of baptism, and then, within that fellowship, to continue teaching them everything Jesus had commanded them. It is not easy to follow Jesus Christ. He never suggested it would be. But it is far better than not following him, for not only do we have his command to teach everything, but we also have the sure and certain promise of the Lord’s presence with us as we go.”

(See the new edition of “The Heart of the Cross” by James Montgomery Boice and Philip Graham Ryken, P&R Publishing – 2022)

6. Finally, we have the assurance of Jesus’s presence as we carry out his commission (v.20). It is very important to know that we do not do this ministry alone, and that as we evangelize, he is with us as he promised. He is present with us in his fullness and power, not to protect or preserve us from persecution, but to encourage and empower us, give us wisdom, open doors, and enable us to persevere both in good and in bad times. He is present to convict and convert his elect. Darrell Johnson was correct when he wrote, “Evangelism is joining a conversation the Holy Spirit is already having with another person.” Satan will not succeed in his campaign against us and the ministry of the gospel because evangelism is teamwork with God and with other Christians. There is definitely spiritual warfare in the ministry of evangelism. Satan, the flesh, and the world will do all they can to stop us from sharing the good news of Christ. We must resist them, knowing that the Lord is with us. God is already at work and will be at work long after we’re done sharing the gospel. We can and must trust the Lord to do what we cannot do. Evangelism is His work, and we are merely helpers in His vineyard. He has promised us His presence and the Holy Spirit to enable us to do the work of Evangelism and Discipleship.

## B. The Message of Evangelism

What are we supposed to say to people when we evangelize? In other words, what message must people hear and believe in order to be saved? Dr. James Stewart drew attention to the importance of this when he wrote,

“A Church that knows its Lord and is possessed by its gospel cannot but propagate creatively the life that it has found. A Christian who is taking his faith seriously cannot but evangelize. Now the first axiom of effective evangelism is that the evangelist must be sure of his message. Any haziness or hesitation there is fatal.”

Here, then, are several Bible truths – the message – that a sinner needs to hear even if he doesn’t want to hear them:

1. First, God is a gracious, loving, holy, and just God. Rightly knowing God is a matter of grave importance. Dr. D.A. Carson rightly reminds us that the “one thing we most urgently need in Western Christendom is a deeper knowledge of God. We need to know God better.” We need to know God because a wrong view of God will undermine the gospel message while the right view of God opens the door to understand the gospel. Dr. R.C. Sproul once said, “The greatest crisis in the Christian church today is that they don’t actually know God. They don’t know who He is or what He’s like ...” So, I ask you, do you know this God? John Calvin asks in his catechism, “What is the chief end of human life?” He answers, “To know God.” There are several reasons the knowledge of God is central and supreme for all human life, including: eternal life, better relationships, power, faith, and effective, true worship and ministry.

This is what the LORD says: “Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me.” (Jeremiah 9:23-24)

2. Second, we are sinners and ungrateful rebels before God and, consequently, justly subject to his wrath and eternal condemnation in hell for our sin. The wages/penalty for sin is death (physical, spiritual, and eternal). We need to know

ourselves and our true condition and plight before God – otherwise, we will fail to see the need to be rescued and reconciled to Him. Inasmuch as people don't want to hear this, it is important that we declare God's truth concerning his righteous judgment of our rebellion. Bishop J.C. Ryle counsels that:

“We need to be straitly warned, that it is no light matter whether we repent or not. We need to be reminded, that there is a hell as well as a heaven, and an everlasting punishment for the wicked, as well as everlasting life for the godly. We are fearfully apt to forget this. We talk of the love and mercy of God, and we do not remember sufficiently His justness and holiness. Let us be very careful on this point. It is no real kindness to keep back the terrors of the Lord. It is good for us all to be taught that it is possible to be lost forever, and that all unconverted people are hanging over the brink of the pit.”  
(J.C. Ryle, Commentary: Matthew 3)

3. Third, God in His great mercy and amazing grace so loved us that He gave His Son, Jesus Christ, to make atonement for our sins on the Cross of Calvary by His death. The Bible teaches that without the shedding of blood (death) there is no forgiveness of sin. God will NOT forgive sin that is not atoned for. Repentance and good works cannot atone for sin. No one can determine what is acceptable atonement for sin, except God who is, indeed, the offended One! His determination is that sin will be forgiven only on the basis of atonement by death of a sinless substitute. In His mercy He sent His sinless Son to atone for our sin. On the third day of his death, Jesus rose as evidence of the fact that His atoning sacrifice for our sin was accepted. Hence, we who believe can now be justified by faith alone and have victory over sin, Satan, and death. (*cf.* John 3:16; Numbers 21:4-9; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11).
4. Fourth, in order to receive the benefits of Christ's death and resurrection, the sinner must repent of sin and believe in Jesus Christ. In Mark 1:14-15, the Bible says, “Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel’.” What is repentance? Here is Dr. J.I. Packer:

“Repentance is more than just sorrow for the past; repentance is a change of mind and heart, a new life of denying self and serving the Savior as King in self’s place ... More than once, Christ deliberately called attention to the radical break with the past that repentance involves. ‘If any man will come after me, let him DENY HIMSELF, and take up his cross daily, and follow me ... Whosoever will LOSE HIS LIFE FOR MY SAKE, the same (but only he) shall save it. [Luke 9:23-24, cf. Luke 14:27, 33] ... The repentance that Christ requires of His people consists in a settled refusal to set any limit to the claims which he may make on their lives.”

C.S. Lewis agreed, and wrote:

“Fallen man is not simply an imperfect creature who needs improvement: he is a rebel who must lay down his arms. Laying down your arms, surrendering, saying you are sorry, realizing that you have been on the wrong track and getting ready to start life over again from the ground floor – that is the only way out of a hole. This process of surrender, this movement full speed astern, is what Christians call repentance.”

Repentance from sin is not an option for a sinner who desires to be saved and it is not optional in our evangelistic and discipleship ministry. Dr. R.C. Sproul rightly noted, “No one can enter the kingdom of God without repentance, without fleeing from sin and putting his trust in Christ alone.”

In addition to repentance from sin, the penitent sinner must believe in Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord. To believe in him is to lean only on his sacrificial death for full salvation. To believe is to trust that Christ in his sacrifice has made full payment and atonement for one’s sins, satisfying the justice of God and quenching his wrath, whereby our punishment is averted and we are made safe for ever. Faith in Christ as Savior is to believe that he died for us to save us from the wrath of God, and faith in Christ as Lord is to accept the fact that he has divine power, authority, and sovereign control over us, and, consequently, deserves our love and obedience. Without faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord, repentance and religion have no eternal value in regard to salvation.

5. Fifth, when we turn away from sin to Christ by faith, we receive the blessings (or benefits) of Christ's death. As Melancthon reminded the church, "To know Christ is to know his benefits," which are: forgiveness, justification, righteousness, union with Christ, reconciliation with God, access to the Father, the gift of the Holy Spirit, eternal life, adoption, glorification, membership in the invisible universal church militant, power, peace, and more.
  
6. Sixth, having turned to Christ as Savior, we must begin to obey him as our Lord and King. This is the point of James chapter 2: 17, 26 – faith without works is dead faith. Dr J.I. Packer tells us, "In reality, holiness is the goal of our redemption. As Christ died in order that we may be justified, so we are justified in order that we may be sanctified and made holy." Dr. Sinclair Ferguson agreed with this truth when he wrote, "It is misleading to say that God accepts us the way we are. Rather, he accepts us despite the way we are. He receives us only in Christ and for Christ's sake. Nor does he mean to leave us the way he found us but to transform us into the likeness of his Son." Martin Luther concurred when he wrote, "there is no justification without sanctification." John Calvin added his voice, stating, "Those who are justified by true faith prove their justification by obedience and good works, not by a bare and imaginary semblance of faith. And as Paul contends that men are justified without the aid of works, so James will not allow any to be regarded as justified who are destitute of good works."

In addition, we must help new believers become actively engaged in the worship, ministry, and mission of a local church. Every discipleship ministry needs to include a plan to incorporate new Christians into ministry, worship, mission, discipline, and fellowship of both the local and universal church. The new Christian grows through trials of faith and practicing the means of grace, such as: daily Bible reading/study, prayer, attending worship services where the Bible is preached, involvement in ministry/mission, sharing the gospel with others, obeying the Word of God, and giving of their financial resources for the work of the church.

Everything we have and do for God is by His enabling grace. This concept troubles the self-righteous and prideful, who think they can save themselves by doing things their way. Hence John Wesley writes: "Nothing is more repugnant to capable, reasonable people than grace. We repent by grace, we believe by grace, we are pardoned and justified by grace, we are sanctified and live holy by grace, and we will persevere and receive eternal glory by grace, and

that grace is His grace, the grace of God in Christ Jesus.” The Bible says it well in Ephesians 2:8-10,

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them,”

... so that ALL the glory goes to God alone.

### **C. The Meaning and Methods (Practice) of Evangelism**

What is evangelism and how do we go about it? The Primates of the Anglican Communion have defined Evangelism thus: “To evangelize is to make known by WORD and DEED the love of the crucified and risen Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit so that people will repent, believe, and receive Christ as their Savior and obediently serve him as their Lord in the fellowship of his Church.”

“Evangelism is one beggar telling another beggar where to get bread.” – D.T. Niles

“Evangelism is joining a conversation the Holy Spirit is already having with another person.” – Darrell Johnson

So, how do we proceed?

1. Prayer – Pray for wisdom, guidance, boldness, and freedom to share the gospel. Pray for deliverance of sinners from Satanic blindness and bondage. Pray for direct Divine intervention. Sometimes the Lord uses dreams, discipline, trials, and supernatural activity to begin to draw people to hear the gospel. Dreams and discipline won't save people, but in some cases can prepare the ground for the reception of the gospel. We must pray so that our gospel work does not depend on the arm of flesh, which will always fail.
2. Heart-Work and Words – Evangelism is first and foremost a heart issue before it is an action matter. In other words, we speak based on what is in our hearts and

what the passion of our hearts is. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. If there is no passion for Jesus in our hearts, we won't have anything (or much) to say. So, we must first do heart-work in order to do gospel-work, which involves:

- preaching and teaching
- testimony/witness
- personal exhortation and admonition

As important as our testimony of conversion and godly life is, we need to be aware that neither of those things is the gospel. The gospel is about Jesus – his perfect life and his atoning death for, his resurrection and his ascension; and the invitation to repent of sin and trust in our Lord Jesus Christ alone for salvation and reconciliation with God.

3. Good deeds and a godly life – As Christians, we cannot effectively separate ourselves from the gospel we claim to believe and preach to a skeptical world. Our actions or inactions affect the reception of gospel we proclaim whether we like it or not. In 1974, Os Guinness, speaking at the Lausanne Congress regarding evangelism, made the following observation:

“... Part of our failure to get thinking people to take the Gospel seriously is born of a credibility gap. We claim Christianity is true – a claim which is awesome by contemporary standards, but then we whittle down our claims by the patent incongruity of our practices of the truth. The way we operate speaks louder than what we say. Without the practice of truth, evangelism is in danger of becoming a giant institutional mouth or as E.M. Forster dismissed it scornfully, ‘poor, talkative, little Christianity!’”

John R.W. Stott echoed a similar sentiment:

“No church can spread the gospel with any degree of integrity, let alone credibility, unless it has been visibly changed by the gospel it preaches. We need to look like what we are talking about. It is not enough to receive the gospel and pass it on; we must embody it in our common life of faith, love, joy, peace, righteousness, and hope.”

Dr. Michael Green stated it well when he wrote,

“One thing is certain: unless people are impressed by the Christian lives they see, they are not going to want to go further and examine the truth of the Christian message we proclaim.”

Clement of Rome made a similar point in the second century:

“For when unbelievers hear from our mouth the oracles of God they wonder at their beauty and greatness. Then, discovering that our deeds are not worthy of the words we utter, they turn from their wonder to blasphemy, saying it is all a myth and delusion.”

Every day of your life you are either writing and living the gospel of Christ or the anti-gospel by your deeds and word – a chapter a day for people to see, so to speak. There is no middle place. And people read what you write – whether our writing is distorted or true. So, the question we must answer as Christians is this: what are you/we writing ... Christ’s gospel, or your own distorted anti-gospel?

4. Build Relationships and networks with people for the sake of the gospel and make sure you truly care about them as people, not just as evangelistic prospects to be “exploited” for God’s sake. Be real!
5. Invitations to church events: worship, Bible Study, Prayer meetings, parish or private dinners, hunting, shooting range, sporting/football games, potlucks, movie nights, picnics, etc.
6. Endeavor to have a welcoming, loving, and gracious attitude. Your church building will not necessarily attract new people. And even if it did, they wouldn’t stay long. People want a loving and welcoming church. They need and desire love and truth, and both are found in Christ and his church.
7. Evangelism Programs & Events: Christianity Explored (Rev’d Rico Tice); The Word 121 (Richard Borgonon); Alpha Course (Rev’d Charles Marnham and

Rev'd Nicky Gumbel); Evangelism Explosion (Dr. James Kennedy); Guest Services, etc.

8. Christian Literature: tracts such as “What is the gospel” by Greg Gilbert, and “Two Ways to Live” by Matthias Media, and more ...
9. Liturgical Seasons: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Ash Wednesday/Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Trinity, Christ the King, All Souls/All Saints ...
10. Pastoral visits/events and sacramental occasions: Baptism and Confirmation preparations/classes, funerals/service of songs, Eucharistic Worship, Marriage Preparations, marriage counseling, etc.
11. Train the congregation on the Mandate, Message, and Method of Evangelism (please see the appendices of this document for additional valuable material).
12. The Prayer of Commitment to Christ as Savior and Lord:

“Father, I’m sorry for sinning against you in thought, word, and deed, by what I have done and by what I’ve failed to do. Please forgive me of my sins against you. Thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, to save me. I believe in my heart, and I confess with my mouth, that Jesus died for me, thereby paying the penalty for my sin, and that he rose again from the dead. I now surrender my life to you, and, by your grace, I will follow you in obedience as my Savior and Lord for the rest of my life. *Amen.*”

Our Lord Jesus meant it when he said, “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35). J. Mack Stiles reminds us of the importance of that statement, writing:

“A little later, during the same time with his disciples, he prayed that they would be unified, ‘so that the world may believe that you have sent me.’ (John 17:20–21). Understand this: Jesus says the love we have for one another in the church is a statement that we are truly converted. And when we are unified in the body, we show to the world that Jesus is the Son of God. Love confirms our discipleship.

Unity confirms Christ's deity. What a powerful witness! There are many passages that instruct and shape our evangelistic efforts, but these verses are the Biblical foundations that show us that the church is to be a culture of evangelism. This means that the local church is the gospel made visible. If we are to picture the gospel in our love for one another, that needs to take place in a local congregation of people who have covenanted together in love to be a church. It's not abstract love, but love for real people in the real world. I can't tell you how many times I have heard from non-Christians that the church was strange to them, but what drew them into the fellowship was the love among the members. But the gospel is pictured not just in our love. Have you ever thought of how many biblical instructions God has built into the fabric of the church that, if done correctly, serve as proclamations of the gospel? In pursuing a healthy culture of evangelism, we don't remake the church for evangelism. Instead, we allow the things that God has already built into the church to proclaim the gospel. Jesus did not forget the gospel when he built the church. For example, baptism pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. It shows how his death is our death and his life our life. The Lord's Supper proclaims the death of Christ until he returns and prompts us to confess our sins and experience forgiveness anew. When we pray, we pray the truths of God. When we sing, we sing the great things God has done for us through the gospel. When we give financially, we're giving to advance the gospel message. And of course, the preaching of the Word brings the gospel. In fact, the preaching of the Word is what forms the church to begin with. And, once formed, the church is given the task of making disciples who then are sent to preach the gospel to form new churches. This cycle has been happening since Jesus ascended into heaven and will continue until he returns for the second and final time. A culture of evangelism is grassroots, not top-down. In a culture of evangelism, people understand that the main task of the church is to be the church."

The gospel also calls us to commit ourselves to being the church as Jesus intended it. Whenever we proclaim the gospel, we tell people that Jesus came to save us from sin's penalty, power, and presence. But it's also important to proclaim that he came to adopt us into the family of God and bring into being the church in which Jews and Gentiles, rich and poor, educated and non-educated, white and black, are united with one another in love as brothers and sisters. Christ came to reconcile us to God and to one another, thereby creating one new humanity in Christ and with Christ as Lord and Savior. I love the way Dr. John R. Stott expresses it:

“The good news of the unsearchable riches of Christ which Paul preached is that he died and rose again not only to save sinners like me (though he did), but also to create a single new humanity; not only to redeem us from sin but also to adopt us into God’s family; not only to reconcile us to God but also to reconcile us to one another. Thus, the church is an integral part of the gospel. The gospel is good news of a new society as well as of a new life.”

God’s intention for the church is that it be a multilingual, multiethnic, and multicultural community of those who are disciples of Christ, knitted together in love, and united in the mission and worship of the triune God. Does your church truly welcome those who are different from the majority of your members? Or do you just give them a condescending, nodding recognition? Be the gospel Church as God intended it in his Word through commitment to Christ and his gospel. Being a gospel church is the antidote to racism and tribalism and political rancor to a watching world. Being a gospel church makes us a catalyst for change in our world and in the Anglican Communion.

#### **D. Conclusion**

Our mission is to make disciples of all nations for Christ and to help those who are in need. I believe that leading sinners to Christ to be reconciled to God, saved from an eternal Hell, and discipling them to become mature disciples and genuine worshippers takes precedence over every other activity in Christian ministry and secular occupation. C.S. Lewis put it well when he said, “The salvation of a soul is more important than the production of all epics and tragedies in the world.” This is because in and through the gospel, as Henry Smith noted, God “hides our unrighteousness with his righteousness. He covers our disobedience with his obedience. He shadows our death with his death, so that the wrath of God cannot find us.”

But God does more than “cover” and “hide” our sins and disobedience – He washes, forgives, sanctifies, transforms, and sends us out to do good works, especially the good work of spreading the gospel and holiness of life. Charles Spurgeon clearly reminds us of God’s thorough saving and sanctifying work in these words,

“Christ will be master of the heart, and sin must be mortified. If your life is unholy, then your heart is unchanged and you are an unsaved person. The Savior

will sanctify His people, renew them, give them a hatred of sin, and a love of holiness. The grace that does not make a man better than others is a worthless counterfeit. Christ saves His people, not IN their sins, but FROM their sins. Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord.”

Spurgeon provided a further warning:

“Beware, I pray thee, of presuming that thou art saved. If thy heart be renewed, if thou shalt hate the things that thou didst once love, and love the things that thou didst once hate; if thou hast really repented; if there be a thorough change of mind in thee; if thou be born again, then hast thou reason to rejoice: but if there be no vital change, no inward godliness; if there be no love to God, no prayer, no work of the Holy Spirit, then thy saying ‘I am saved’ is but thine own assertion, and it may delude, but it will not deliver thee.”

The point is clear – the gospel, when faithfully preached and truly received, ALWAYS CHANGES a person’s life!

The call to evangelize, that is, to be witnesses of Christ is a call to all Christians, not just clergy. In the early church, every Christian was expected to be involved. Edward Gibbon noted that by 49 A.D., the gospel had reached India, and the borders of China by 61 A.D. How did that happen? Gibbon responds, “It became the most sacred duty of a new convert to diffuse among his friends and relations the inestimable blessing which he had received.” Another historian by the name of Adolf Harnack declared,

“The most numerous and successful missionaries of the Christian religion were not the regular teachers but Christians themselves in virtue of their loyalty and courage ... it was characteristic of this religion that everyone who seriously confessed the faith proved of service to its propaganda. We cannot hesitate to believe that the great mission of Christianity was, in reality, accomplished by means of informal missionaries.”

So, as you live every day of your life as a Christian, let the Holy Spirit enable you to live a life worthy of the gospel. Let the Holy Spirit use you to bring many to Christ by letting the light of Christ shine forth through you in holiness and obedience to God, to the end that God be glorified. The Lord has made each of us a new creation in Christ and given us a new vocation –

the ministry of reconciliation – with the message of reconciliation through penitent faith in Christ alone. We are Christ’s ambassadors to the world.

In practical terms, first we need to engage in Personal evangelism, Church-based evangelism, and Planting of new churches in this Diocese. The Lord wants all of us to engage in this kingdom work because the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers (preachers) are few. Sinners are everywhere, so do not steal members from one church to plant a new church – that is NOT gospel work. Everywhere in this Diocese we have concentrations of clergy, and we need to begin working out how some of them will be sent out to plant churches. If you don’t, won’t, or can’t initiate it, I will help you do it very soon!

Second, to be effective in personal and corporate evangelism we must realize that what we are, what we do, what we say and how we say it, and where we go affect our effectiveness. It is important that we let the word of God rule our lives in all those areas (and in the choices we make) so that our witness will be authentic and have integrity when viewed through the eyes of a skeptical world.

Third, we need to be clear on our strategy and tactics. Use the acronym “PICSIT” – **P**ray for those on your list to win for Christ; **I**nvite them to Church or to Church events; **C**are for and spend time with them; **S**hare the gospel of Christ, that is the good news that Jesus died and paid the penalty for their sins thereby making forgiveness, transformation, eternal life, sonship, and peace with God possible for those who repent and believe in Christ; **I**nitiate them into the life and ministry and mission of the local church; and **T**rust God to do his work of regeneration and conversion even with your fallible and terribly incomplete message and method. He will accomplish his purpose through us despite our limitations.

So, let us go forth armed with the gospel as we dutifully and faithfully carry out our heavenly ambassadorial assignment for Christ in the world!

## **IV. RESTRUCTURING OF CHURCH OF NIGERIA NORTH AMERICAN MISSION (CONNAM)**

The three CONNAM Dioceses, The Anglican Diocese of the West (ADOTW), Anglican Diocese of the Trinity (ADOTT), and the Jurisdiction of the Armed Forces and Chaplaincy (JAFC), were previously unrestricted in the planting and oversight of parishes across North America. Most of the parishes planted by ADOTW and ADOTT are situated in urban areas with considerable Nigerian populations. To enhance inter-Diocesan coordination and effectiveness in Christian mission, a Restructuring Committee was commissioned by the Primate, The Most Rev'd Henry Ndukuba, to propose a restructuring of CONNAM's current Diocesan jurisdictions and structures on the basis of geography alone. Since the JAFC locates parishes in and near military and other traditional chaplain locations, it was not affected by the Committee's proposed geographical realignment.

The Restructuring Committee was comprised of the following members: The Rt. Rev'd Dr. Felix Orji (ADOTW Diocesan), as Chair; The Rt. Rev'd Dr. Derek Jones (JAFC Diocesan); The Rt. Rev'd Dr. Augustine Unuigbo (ADOTT Suffragan); The Ven. Dr. Barnabas Emenogu (ADOTW); The Ven. Don Armstrong (ADOTW); The Ven. Dr. Femi Adetoro (ADOTT); The Ven. Matthew Olajide (ADOTT); Sir Nkemdi Innocent Ohalete (ADOTW); Sir Dr. Benjamin Udoh (ADOTT); and Ven. Temitayo Fasan (ADOTT), Secretary.

### **RECOMMENDED GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISION OF DIOCESAN JURISDICTION IN THE USA & CANADA –**

Based on the current location of ADOTW's and ADOTT's respective cathedrals and other logistical considerations, the USA and Canada were divided as shown below:

#### **The Anglican Diocese of The West (ADOTW) – USA**

1. Missouri
2. Arkansas
3. Louisiana
4. Mississippi
5. Alabama
6. Georgia

7. Tennessee
8. Florida
9. Arizona
10. New Mexico
11. Texas
12. Oklahoma
13. Utah
14. Colorado
15. Kansas
16. Nevada
17. Alaska
18. Hawaii
19. Montana
20. Idaho
21. Washington
22. Wyoming
23. Oregon
24. California

**ADOTW – CANADA**

1. Yukon
2. Northwest Territories
3. Nunavut
4. British Columbia
5. Alberta

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Anglican Diocese of the Trinity (**ADOTT**) – USA

1. Iowa
2. Illinois
3. Wisconsin
4. Michigan
5. Minnesota

6. Indiana
7. North Dakota
8. South Dakota
9. Nebraska
10. Maine
11. New Hampshire
12. Vermont
13. Massachusetts
14. Rhode Island
15. Connecticut
16. New York
17. New Jersey
18. Pennsylvania
19. Delaware
20. Maryland
21. District of Columbia (Washington, D.C.)
22. Virginia
23. West Virginia
24. Ohio
25. Kentucky
26. North Carolina
27. South Carolina

**ADOTT – CANADA**

1. Saskatchewan
  2. Manitoba
  3. Ontario
  4. Quebec
  5. New Brunswick
  6. Nova Scotia
  7. Prince Edward Island
  8. Newfoundland and Labrador
-

## NOTES & RECOMMENDATIONS –

- A. The Area designated for ADOTT in Canada includes the largest population areas, the majority of provinces, and, thus, encompasses the majority of Nigerians in Canada.
- B. Both Dioceses currently have parishes across most of their respective allotted geographical areas. Adopting the Committee’s recommendation minimizes the overall impact of “change” based on geography.
- C. Clergy could transfer from one Diocese to another without taking their churches with them (as is the custom in Anglicanism).
- D. To minimize administrative hiccups, emotional trauma, and/or discomfort, the Committee strongly recommended the adoption of a “grandfather clause” to permit existing parishes to remain in their respective current parent Dioceses unless and/or until such time that they decide to transfer to what would otherwise be their respective geographically assigned Dioceses.

(NOTE: THIS RECOMMENDATION WAS REJECTED BY THE HOUSE OF BISHOPS)

- E. ADOTW and ADOTT will maintain their respective existing cathedrals, and the Diocesan Bishops will allocate geographical areas for their respective Suffragan Bishops.
- F. After geographical boundaries are established, any Diocese that thereafter plants a church within the geographical boundaries of the other Diocese must relinquish that church to its natural geographical Diocese.
- G. The Jurisdiction of the Armed Forces and Chaplaincy (JAFC) will remain unchanged.
- H. The Coordinating Bishop of CONNAM will provide general supervision (coordination) of the North American Mission as directed by the Primate of the Church of Nigeria.

## **V. REGIONS FOR THE SUFFRAGAN BISHOPS OF THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF THE WEST –**

We are blessed to have two Suffragan Bishops in the Anglican Diocese of the West in North America – Bishop Scott Seely and Bishop Celestine Ironna. Both Suffragans together with their wives have been tremendous blessing to me, Mama West, and to this Diocese. I count it a great privilege to serve the Lord together with them as we carry out his mission as servants of the gospel.

It was my plan from before their election for these two men to assist me in specific areas in the Diocese. The Suffragan Bishops assisting the Diocesan Bishop in assigned regions helps the Diocese function more effectively. As the Diocesan, I ask our Suffragans to perform episcopal duties that normally reside with the Diocesan Bishop, such as episcopal visits to parishes in their region, confirmations, admission of women to the Women’s Guild and Mothers Union, and other specific roles within the Diocese. The investiture of Knights, however, will remain centralized under the Diocesan. Suffragans can perform ordinations when the Primate approves them to do so, and the Diocese remains one single Diocese under the supervision of the Diocesan. In other words, with respect to the administration of the Diocese, all clergy and parishes in The Anglican Diocese of the West are under the direct authority, supervision, and discipline of the Diocesan Bishop.

In addition to other responsibilities that may be assigned from time to time, the Diocesan Bishop, at his discretion, has assigned Suffragan Bishops to assist in the following designated geographical regions within the Diocese.

### **Regions of Episcopal Ministry for ADOTW’s Suffragan Bishops –**

The Anglican Diocese of the West Suffragans will assist me in the following regions:

#### **REGION ONE – Southwest USA/Canada: Suffragan Bishop Scott Seely**

1. Arizona
2. New Mexico
3. Texas
4. Oklahoma

5. Utah
6. Colorado
7. Kansas
8. Nevada
9. Washington
10. Wyoming
11. Oregon
12. California
13. British Columbia
14. Alberta
15. Nunavut

**REGION TWO – Southeast USA/Canada: Suffragan Bishop Celestine Ironna**

1. Missouri
2. Arkansas
3. Louisiana
4. Mississippi
5. Alabama
6. Georgia
7. Tennessee
8. Florida
9. Alaska
10. Hawaii
11. Montana
12. Idaho
13. Northwest Territories
14. Yukon
15. Persian Gulf

**SUFFRAGAN BISHOP RESPONSIBILITIES –**

ADOTW Suffragans shall:

- A. Remain Rectors of their respective churches;

- B. Assist the Diocesan Bishop with administration, church planting, and evangelistic efforts in assigned geographical areas, working with Regional Archdeacons and local clergy to this end;
- C. Assist the Diocesan Bishop with pastoral care of clergy;
- D. Visit churches in their respective regions at least once per month, and endeavor not to be away from their own parishes more than once per month (the parish being visited will bear the cost of air travel and hotel accommodations, and honorariums offered for such visits shall belong to the Suffragans);
- E. Assist the Diocesan Bishop with Confirmations, the Ordination of Deacons or Priests (when approved by the Primate), and the Admission of women to Women's Guild and Mothers Union in their respective regions;
- F. Assist the Diocesan Bishop with other ministry, administrative, and management matters he may assign to them from time to time;
- G. Support the leadership of the Diocesan Bishop;
- H. Attend Diocesan Board meetings;
- I. Attend Diocesan Synods and other special meetings;
- J. Serve as members of a Council of Advisors to the Diocesan Bishop;
- K. Attend Standing Committee meeting of the Church of Nigeria at least once per year;
- L. Bishop Seely will assist the Diocesan Bishop with Missions/Church Planting and Synods;
- M. Bishop Ironna will assist the Diocesan Bishop with Stewardship & Clergy Retreats; and
- N. Suffragan Bishops shall be members of the Diocesan Board serving as one house with the Diocesan Bishop.

## **VI. DIOCESAN YOUNG ADULTS FELLOWSHIP & MINISTRY**

I ask all Clergy, parishes, and archdeaconries to reach out to our Young Adults and assist them to stay connected to one another. The Venerable Dr. Barnabas Emenogu and his team have done a fantastic job of leading this ministry. We are grateful to The Rev'd John Stonestreet for giving his time whenever asked to minister to our young adults. And our gratitude also extends to my son, John Orji, for setting up a social, yet private media network to enhance communication among the young adults in our Diocese. This network, known as a **Discord Community Server**, can be accessed at:

<https://discord.gg/wmEV8FwnYw>

Please forward this to the Young Adults in your parishes to join. This network is not for Clergy or for older adults – it is only for the Young Adults in our Diocese from 20-35 years of age.

## **VII. CLERGY PREFERMENTS**

It is my pleasure to prefer the following individuals as Canons in the Diocese:

1. The Rev'd Joe Eze
2. The Rev'd Eze Akoma
3. The Rev'd Richard Bates
4. The Rev'd Jeremiah Aderemi

## VIII. FINAL REMARKS

We are in our Decade of Evangelism. As we begin this season of our lives together, I would like us to pray for a mighty work of revival in our hearts, our countries, our communities, our parishes, our families, and our Diocese. We need revived and renewed hearts to accomplish God's purposes. The Lord renews our hearts through his Word and prayer. As Dr. Douglas Sweeney correctly notes,

“Bible and church history show us over and over again that when God's people come together, repent of their sins, cry out to him for mercy, and expect him to respond, God uses them to bring about needed reformation. And when their leaders help each other to promote such behavior, there's no limit to the scale on which the Lord will bless his people. There's no simple *quid pro quo* in the history of redemption. But there is a correlation between mortifying sin and walking by the Spirit, between humbling ourselves in God's sight and being exalted.”

I ask you to commit yourself and your congregation to preaching and sharing the full gospel of grace – a gospel that offers forgiveness and summons us to living a holy life. I ask you to live a life worthy of the gospel so that the gospel will be attractive to others. Your life as a Christian matters to the non-believer. In his Apology (Defense) to Emperor Hadrian Caesar in approximately 137 A.D., the Athenian Christian philosopher Marcianus Aristides described the winsome life of Christians that contributed to the growth of Christianity in the first and second centuries:

“It is the Christians, O Emperor, who have sought and found the truth, for they acknowledge God. They do not keep for themselves the goods entrusted to them. They do not covet what belongs to others. They show love to their neighbours. They do not do to another what they would not wish to have done to themselves. They speak gently to those who oppress them, and in this way they make them their friends. It has become their passion to do good to their enemies. They live in the awareness of their smallness.

“Every one of them who has anything gives ungrudgingly to the one who has nothing. If they see a traveling stranger, they bring him under their roof. They rejoice over him as over a real brother, for they do not call one another brothers after the flesh, but they know they are brothers in the Spirit and in God. If they hear that one of them is imprisoned or oppressed for the sake of Christ, they take

care of all his needs. If possible, they set him free. If anyone among them is poor or comes into want while they themselves have nothing to spare, they fast two or three days for him. In this way they can supply any poor man with the food he needs. This, O Emperor, is the rule of life of the Christians, and this is their manner of life.”

My prayer is that the Lord our God will grant us:

More faith and more faithfulness;  
More patience and more kindness;  
More humility and more obedience;  
More strength and more wisdom;  
More grace and more anointing;  
More revelation and more guidance;  
More mercy and more power;  
More health and more favor;  
More breakthroughs and more testimonies;  
More provision and more joy;  
More peace and more protection;  
More love and godliness;  
More blessings and more of all God has in store for you, your family, and your Ministry; and  
More grace and power to faithfully fulfill the task he has given us through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Please stand as we sing:

1. Forth in thy name, O Lord, I go,  
My daily labor to pursue;  
Thee, only Thee, resolved to know  
In all I think or speak or do.
2. The task Thy wisdom hath assigned,  
O let me cheerfully fulfill;  
In all my works Thy presence find,  
And prove Thy good and perfect will.

3. Thee may I set at my right hand,  
Whose eyes mine in-most substance see,  
And labor on at thy command,  
And offer all my works to Thee.

3. For Thee delightfully employ  
What e'er Thy bounteous grace hath given;  
And run my course with even joy,  
And closely walk with Thee to heaven.

\* \* \* \* \*

The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; The LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. *Amen.*