



Pope Francis

POPE FRANCIS ANNOUNCES YEAR OF PRAYER FOR 2025 JUBILEE

Vatican City, Jan 21, 2024

Pope Francis has announced the start of a Year of Prayer on Sunday in preparation for the Catholic Church's 2025 Jubilee Year.

In his Angelus address, the

pope said that a Year of Prayer starting on January 21 will be "a year dedicated to rediscovering the great value and absolute need for prayer in one's personal life, in the life of the Church, and in the

world." "Dear brothers and sisters, the coming months will lead us to the opening of the Holy Door, with which we will begin the jubilee," Pope Francis said from the window of the... *contd on page 6*



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Pope Recognizes the Impact of Catholicism in Tivland ...Confers Papal Knighthood¹¹



Makurdi-Enugu Dualisation; End of Agony



Engr. Dave Umahi (L) and Gov. Alia at the flag-off

By Emmanuel Alagh

A sigh of relief will soon be on the hearts of commuters and motorists plying the Makurdi-Enugu federal road which has been

abandoned for over a decade as a result of the negligence by previous administrations. The dualisation of the road which was flagged off in Benue by the minister... *contd on page 15*

2024 HOLY CHILDHOOD (HCA) NATIONAL DAY

By Emmanuel Ogbu

The national day for the Holy Childhood Association is a yearly event that is usually celebrated in Nigeria on every last Sunday of January.

The event this year comes up on January 28. The Holy Childhood Association National day comes up on Sunday, 28th January 2024. It is usually celebrated in Nigeria... *contd on page 4*

Bountiful Harvest: 2 Priests & 17 Deacons⁷



Bishop Anagbe, Priests and Deacons

Pope's Message on World Communications Day: AI can Never Replace Wisdom of Human Heart⁷ Ukum Chairman regains freedom¹⁵

VALENTINE'S DAY; THIS YEAR IS ASH WEDNESDAY

February 14th is generally celebrated as Valentine's Day, and this year is no exception except that it brings out the fuller hidden meaning behind the story of St. Valentine. February 14th is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the Lenten Season by all Catholics. The cardinal elements of the Lenten season are prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. All Christians embrace these ideals and in line with the symbolism of ashes sprinkled on heads - "Remember you are dust and unto dust you shall return" or repent and believe the gospel - believers commit themselves to doing acts of love and not evil. Clearly, the celebration of Valentine's Day by our young people in this part of the world is associated with vices and terrible behaviour than the expressions of penance, fraternal charity, and righteousness symbolised in the celebration of Ash Wednesday. The original tale of St Valentine, according to myths and tradition, was that of true love for neighbour. St John Chrysostom always said: "Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours but theirs." In its various forms according to the Catechism of

the Catholic Church, human misery is the obvious sign of the inherited condition of frailty and need for salvation: the various forms include, among many, material deprivation, unjust oppression, physical and psychological illness and death. Jesus Christ came and redeemed us from all of them, and as his followers, we are obliged to continue with this vision and consider the poor as the object of preferential love. This is the love that heals and not the kind that hurts. Therefore, all young people must embrace the meaning of true love at this Valentine's Day. There are many people who are deprived of basic necessities, including those in the IDPs and within our neighbourhood. We must be creative and be courageous to love others because nobody will ever have enough before sharing with others. After all, the prayer Jesus



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Christ taught is short and simple but leads us to the Father through the path of faith, hope, and charity. If you understand, therefore, the prayer of our Father, you would be a wonderful person.

Happy Valentine's Day, like no other because it is Ash Wednesday!



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CONSTITUENCY BRIEFING

RT. HON. ARC. AUSTIN ASEMA ACHADO (FNIA, KSI, PHF)

Member, Representing Gwer East/Gwer West Federal Constituency



ACHADO PARLEYS WITH MEDIA TEAM; PROMISES DEMOCRATIC DIVIDENDS TO CONSTITUENTS

The Member representing Gwer/ Gwer-West federal constituency, Hon Arc Asema Achado has met with members of his media team, under the aegis of “Global Press for Dr Achado”. The parley which took place at the Makurdi residence of Dr Achado penultimate was well attended with members of the Dr Achado Press Volunteers Group, comprising media professionals from multidimensional media outfits across the world. Addressing the press group, Hon Achado said he had decided to meet his media partners/helpers with unreserved appreciation for the media work well done through comprehensive coverage and publicity, even though he had not officially mobilized them since the creation of the press team in his favour by Dr Mtswenem last year. The federal legislator used the privilege of the press interface to assure the public and the media community of his desire to put the welfare of his constituents and public infrastructure topmost on his legislative agenda. He challenged both the state and local government authorities to rise up in wealth and health creation, for the overall good of the electorate.

The honourable member added that, as a demonstration of his commitment to boost physical infrastructure and better the lot of security architecture, he had drawn the attention and presence of federal government through the office of Inspector General of Police a comprehensive rehabilitation of the Divisional Police Station and Police Barracks in Aliade. He made this clear while assuring the team of more infrastructural interventions from the federal government to his constituency in 2024. Responding on behalf of the Global Press for Dr. Achado, the convener of the group Dr Mtswenem Tor David, thanked the federal lawmaker for making out time to meet with his press volunteers' group, and promised that, the media under his purview would continue to cover, report and project all his public interest activities, for the world to have apt and objective insight of his legislative representation of the good people of Gwer/ Gwer- West Federal Constituency to avert propaganda by those who may attempt twisting facts and records of his monumental strides. It will be recalled that since assumption on the floor of National

Assembly, Abuja Hon Achado has continued to attract federal appointments for his constituents and

the sighting of monumental projects like the soon to commence the construction of the Institute for Artificial Intelligence and a study center of the Open University of Nigeria, in Aliade.



Achado flag-off constituency projects at Aliade

The House of Representatives Member for Gwer/Gwer West, Arc Dr. Austin Asema Achado Tuesday flagged-off the rehabilitation of Aliade Divisional Police Headquarters and the personnel quarters. The project is the first of the many other infrastructural projects he has attracted to his constituents. At the flag-off ceremony, Hon Achado pointed out that the rehabilitation of the Divisional Headquarters and the personnel quarters is a federal government project under the Inspector General of Police with an expected completion and delivery date of February 2024. The Federal Lawmaker charged the contractors to strictly adhere to the contractual agreement in content, quality and timeline to beat revocation orders and avoid unpleasanties. Hon. Achado who reiterated his strong determination to bring

development to his constituency said, “I challenged the state and local authorities to measure up to their constitutional obligations and social responsibilities to my constituency”. He then assured the people of Gwer/Gwer-West of record-breaking ambition of the federal government on infrastructural projects and appointments/employments ahead. Speaking on the occasion, the member representing Gwer-East Constituency in the Benue State House of Assembly and Chairman House Committee on Information and Orientation, Hon. Elias Audu lauded the active representation of Hon. Dr. Achado. Hon. Audu thanked the federal Lawmaker for the attention aimed at improving security architecture in Gwer/Gwer-West local government areas, promising to team up with Achado to provide uncommon dividends of democracy to the people.





EARTH MATTERS

With

Chief Sr. Julie Ambrose, SND

JulieAmbrose.Atkinson@SNDdeN.org

HEALTH AND THE CLIMATE CRISIS

grow and the earth is now the HOTTEST that it has been for 120,000 YEARS! When the human body is exposed to excessive heat, various changes take place. The body attempts to maintain its internal temperature by sweating and diverting additional blood flow to the skin. This causes heat loss and means there is less blood flow to other organs. Sweating leads to dehydration which can have an affect on the heart and kidneys. In these circumstances death can be the result. Also, in hot weather the quality of air which we are breathing is reduced. This reduces the way the lungs can work, and has led to up to a million deaths all over the world. People who are over 80 years old are particularly likely to be

affected; so also are those known to have breathing difficulties, heart problems or diabetes. Pregnant women are also at risk. Even very healthy people have been known to collapse due to intense heat. When there are bush fires, people living in the area can be affected by breathing in the smoke. Mosquitoes and ticks increase activity in higher temperatures, so there is more likelihood of outbreaks of malaria and other mosquito borne diseases. The drugs prescribed by doctors, particularly for mental stress, may have reduced efficiency. Who suffer most from rising temperatures? Those people who live or work in air-conditioned buildings will be able to stay cool – but what of farmers,

construction workers and others whose work is out of doors? Kidney failure is a threat for those who do not drink enough water. People who are able should wear appropriate clothes made of natural fibers. Cotton will keep people cooler than clothes made from man-made fibers such as nylon or polyester. Let us plant trees which give us shade in our compounds and along our streets! Let us realise that precautions must be taken by everyone. Heatwaves are dangerous to people's health – INCLUDING YOURS -whoever you are. Please take precautions!

The climate crisis is continuing and is getting worse. World scientist announced that July 2023 was the hottest month over the whole earth taken on averages. It was hotter than the previous hottest month, July 2022 when more than 61,000 people in Europe died as a result of the raised temperatures. The quantity of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere continues to

BSU: Generosity triggers divine favours. Bishop tells VC

By Andrew Akor

Abraham's generosity according to Bishop Wilfred Anagbe CMF of Makurdi Diocese must have triggered the favours already promised him by God. In his homily during the thanksgiving Mass for the Vice Chancellor Prof. Tor Iorapuu and the Benue State University Community at the Good Shepherd Chaplaincy Makurdi Benue State the bishop held that the fact that Abraham had his needs did not stop him from being generous to his guests, who happened to be divine-like. The bishop therefore called on the Vice Chancellor to remain steadfast in faith and never to stop being generous to others, an attribute that defines him above other things. Bishop Anagbe equally challenged the Benue State University Community not to abandon the path of patient research so that students can embrace hard work for a better society. The quest for quick money and recognition he said is affecting quality education and young people are no longer willing to grow

through the ranks. The faith of Abraham and his patience, when God promised him a son as an old man and his generosity still stand as attributes of great people who want to help their societies and these are values that our academic environment must exemplify. We must not achieve everything in life before we can help others, life is about service and service is manifested in humble acts of charity and generous thanksgiving. The bishop who was represented by Vicar General Pastoral, Father Moses Iorapuu, reminded the congregation that those who are in positions of authority can be easily misled by those around them, but leaders who are generous and humble always have angels about them. He called on the academic community to put the interest of the students above their personal needs. "If you pay attention to the needs of another, what is yours will be given to you." But "if you destroy what belongs to another, yours too will be denied you." The chaplain, Father Remigius Ihyula who

expressed appreciation to the bishop and the vice chancellor and thanked the dignitaries for supporting the chaplaincy. The Vice Chancellor of the Benue State University Professor Joe Tor Iorapuu and his family on the first day of the new year gave thanks to the Almighty for his show of mercies and blessings towards the family in the year just ended. The Vice Chancellor used the opportunity to call on members of the university community to make it a point of commitment to also pay regular visits to their roots and take interest in what is happening in the university. He thanked all those who came to join and support them. He reiterated that for him and his family, thanksgiving at the altar of God has become a tradition for them to support the Church. The thanksgiving Mass was attended by some members of the state EXCO, former vice chancellors and the governing council, academic and non-academic staff and students.

Relatedly, in the spirit of the season, the vice chancellor played host to students of the university to a New Year's party at the college of Health Sciences. On the occasion the Vice Chancellor revealed the decision by the university to automate students results in two months to enable them to go for the national service. He said he will no longer take it lightly with those who extort students and informed the students that the issues of water and inadequate accommodation the students were going through will soon be surmounted as TETFund and the Benue State Government are working to see these problems come to an end. Responding to the vice chancellor's address, the dean students affairs professor Eriba thanked professor Iorapuu for always been a father figure to the students and charged the students to reciprocate the gestures by being worthy ambassadors of the university and always channel their grievances through the right channel. The president of the students union represented by the Secretary General, Comrade David Uvah thanked the vice chancellor and the university management for always responding to their needs and assured them of their loyalty and co operation. This took place on January 1, 2024.



Vice Chancellor, Prof. Tor Iorapuu with family members at the thanksgiving

Prof. Tor Iorapuu and Wife during procession to the altar

2024 Holy Childhood (HCA) National Day

continued from front page

on every last Sunday of January. The event this year comes up on January 28. The Holy Childhood Association National day comes up on Sunday, 28th January 2024. It is usually celebrated in Nigeria on every last Sunday of

January. It is a day set aside to celebrate all children and acknowledge their missionary roles in the Church. Children are reminded that they are Missionaries and need to make friends for Jesus by sharing the faith with other

children. On a day like this, the Church and the children offer special prayers for children all over the world and raise funds to support children in need. The funds raised are sent to universal solidarity funds of the Holy Childhood for supporting children in Mission

territories and those facing challenges as the result of famine, malnutrition, insurgency, war, other disasters. The theme for this year's celebration is "Together we share our Faith". The celebration will take place in all the parishes in Nigeria. Join us in prayers and support needy children on HCA National day.

COMMISSIONING OF SPORT FACILITIES

12TH JANUARY, 2024

Photo by: Boniface Ella



A section of learners waiting to welcome the Bishop



The Principal Father Apuu welcome the Bishop



The Principal introducing the students to the Bishop



Onchi Jeremiah Adkale taking the first reading



Yiase Matida, the Psamist



Father Simon Tarbo reading the gospel



Bishop gives Homily



PTA chairman Barr. Timothy Dim, Rtd. Air Comdr. Agbacha among others worshippers



A section of SDHSM Staff



A section of learners during the Holy Mass



(L-R) Sister Mary Iber, Mrs. Ukangba & a Guest.



Bishop, Priests performing Eucharistic rites



Bishop administers Holy Communion to congregation



A section of worshippers



CMO and CWO Members



Bishop processing to the commissioning site amidst learners



Bishop Blessing the grave of Late Fr. Michael Murphy among other priests



Bishop sprinkling Holy Water over the grave

Ours Is A Culturally Integrated Church – Bishop Anagbe

continued from back page

The Bishop of Makurdi Diocese, Most Revd Wilfred Chikpa Anagbe CMF has described the Catholic Church as a culturally inclined religious institution and one that integrates the people and the positive ways of life. The bishop asserted this in his address to priests and the religious

working in Makurdi diocese during this year's edition of get-together for co-workers at the Pope John Paul II Pastoral Center.

The chief shepherd of the diocese said the party was an avenue for the priests and the religious to come together and shake off the stress of the previous year as well as refresh themselves for the new year. He

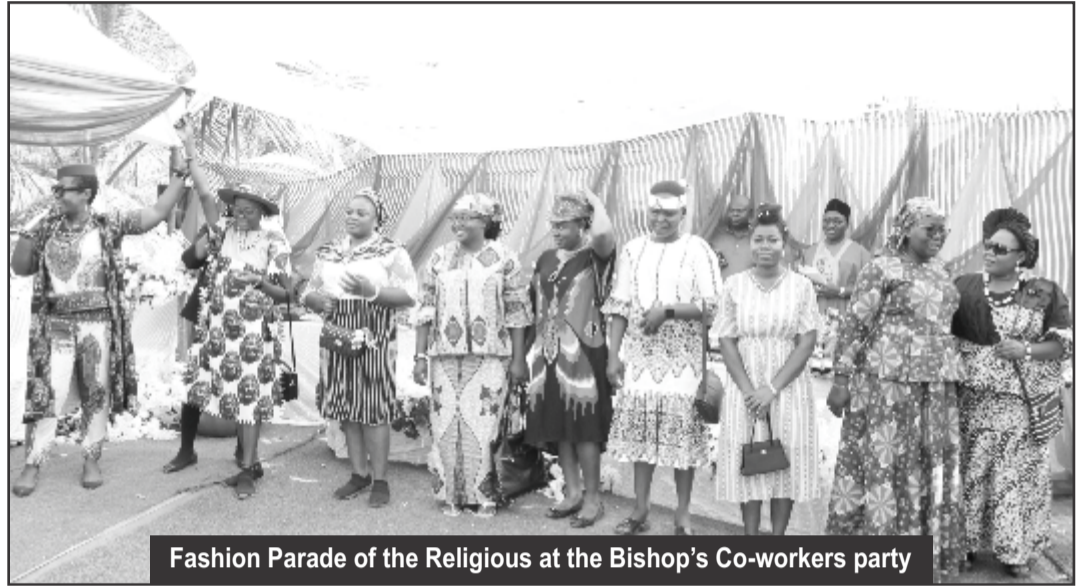
however regretted that the party did not hold the previous year because of the ugly incidents at the end of 2022. The bishop noted that, implicitly the idea of the party had become an annual event which workers in the diocese long for as the year winds down. He appreciated the workers in the diocese for their commitment towards the growth of the church.

The party, among other things, is used to showcase the rich traditional culture of Nigeria as workers are expected to dress in traditional attires. Like previous ones, there was fashion parade competition in both male and female categories. Thus with the following persons emerged winners for the year. Fathers Benjamin Kulekule and Jacob Aku, and Sisters Onyinyechi Ibeh and Mary Jam. There was also exchange of gifts between the co-workers.

The event was held on January 8, 2024.



Bishop Anagbe passing judgement at the priest's fashion parade



Fashion Parade of the Religious at the Bishop's Co-workers party

Pope Francis announces Year of Prayer to prepare for 2025 Jubilee

continued from front page

Apostolic Palace.

"I ask you to intensify your prayer to prepare us to live this event of grace well and to experience the power of God's hope. That is why today we begin a Year of Prayer."

The pope said that the Vatican's Dicastery for Evangelization will publish resources to help Catholic communities to more fully participate in the Year of Prayer. The Holy See Press Office also announced that a press conference on the Year of Prayer will take place on January 23 this year.

The Vatican and the city of Rome are expecting an estimated 35 million people

to flock to the Eternal City for the 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope — the first ordinary jubilee since the Great Jubilee of 2000.

A jubilee is a special holy year of grace and pilgrimage in the Catholic Church. It typically takes place once every 25 years, though the pope can call for extraordinary jubilee years more often, such as in the case of the 2016 Year of Mercy or the 2013 Year of Faith.

Jubilees have biblical roots. The Book of Leviticus called for jubilee years to be held every 50 years for the freeing of slaves and forgiveness of debts as

manifestations of God's mercy. The practice was reestablished by Pope Boniface VIII in 1300.

The 2025 Jubilee Year begins on December 24, 2024 (Christmas Eve), and concludes on January 6, 2026.

The Holy Doors are a central part of any jubilee. These doors, found at St. Peter's Basilica and Rome's other major basilicas, are sealed from the inside and opened during a jubilee year.

The opening of the Holy Door symbolizes the offering of an "extraordinary path" toward salvation for Catholics during a

jubilee. Pilgrims who walk through a Holy Door can receive a plenary indulgence under the usual conditions.

Pope Francis announced the Year of Prayer from the window of the Apostolic Palace after presiding over Mass in St. Peter's Basilica for the Sunday of the Word of God.

In his reflection on Sunday's Gospel in his Angelus address, Pope Francis said that "the Lord loves to involve us in his work of salvation."

"Bringing God's salvation to everyone was for Jesus the greatest joy, his mission, the meaning of his existence ... And in every word and deed with which we join with him in the beautiful adventure of giving love, light, and joy multiply not only around us but also within us," he said.

We've prepared our students to compete favourably in academics Principal HCSC

By Boniface Ella

The Principal of Holy Child Secondary School, Bro Jerome Tartseer recently made a statement affirming that the school has prepared her students to compete well academically within and outside the country. The principal stated this while delivering his speech at the 13th graduation and prize-giving ceremony of the school. The principal charged the students to represent the school positively where ever they find themselves.

Speaking further, the principal expressed his appreciation to Bishop Wilfred Chikpa Anagbe, CMF and the director of Catholic Education Services, Father Peter Apagher of the diocese for creating

an enabling environment for the school to grow to what it has become. He said, as a famous educational institution in the diocese, the school will not rest on its oars in providing quality education.

The bishop who was represented by the Vicar General Administration, Father Francis Wegh, commended the management for their commitment to duty and advised the graduands to be of good character even outside the school, to justify the formation the school had given to them over the years. He thanked the school, parents and teachers for ensuring that the students have access to quality education to become useful to the society.

The highlight of the graduation was the presentation of the gifts to students who

distinguished themselves academically.



Priests, staff and graduands

There was performances of both modern and traditional dances by the students to add splendor to the occasion.

All these took place on the 15th November, 2023.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **Shagwa Helen** now wish to be known and addressed as **Nyuma Helen**. That first Bank and the General Public to note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **Gwambe Rachael Abee** now wish to be known and addressed as **Atoza Rachael Abee**. That concerned authority and the General Public to note.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, formerly known as **Iorkyase Mecivir Celina** now wish to be known and addressed as **Iorlumun Mecivir Celina**. That concerned authority and the General Public to note.

BOUNTIFUL HARVEST; 2 PRIESTS AND 17 DEACONS

By Akor Andrew

In the Royal Charter (cf. Matthew 28:16-20), Christ mandates us to make disciples of all nations, administer sacrament(s), teach and make His word known. This mandate finds its intense expression and fulfillment more in the ministerial priesthood – the sacrament of Christian service. However, Christ notes that the harvest is plentiful but the labourers are few—a reality that tasks us to pray so that the Lord of the harvest will send out labourers for His

harvest (cf. Matthew 9:37-38).

Indeed, the Lord is answering the prayers of His people and sending out labourers for His harvest. This was again witnessed on Saturday, January 6, 2024 at St Mary's Parish, North Bank, Makurdi, Benue State, where the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Makurdi, Most Revd Wilfred Chikpa ANAGBE, and CMF ordained Two (2) priests and seventeen (17) deacons. The two priests were Fathers Raphael Tarbo and Simon Tarbo.

The word “deacon” is from Greek 'diakonos' which means “helper”. Thus, the diaconate is an office associated with service. There are two forms of the diaconate—the permanent diaconate which includes single and married men, and the transitional diaconate which is for those who will eventually be ordained priests. To be ordained a transitional deacon, a candidate must be at least 25 years old and must make a firm promise never to marry after ordination. Those ordained this day belong to the

transitional diaconate. Among them, twelve (12) were incardinated into the Diocese of Makurdi and five (5) for the Via Christi Society. They include: Revd Joshua SughnenAbiem, VC, Revd Peter TerfaAdikpe, Revd Joseph UshahembaAkume, VC, Revd Stephen TerkumaAondona, VC, Revd Aaron AondonaAondohemba, Revd Matthew TorkumaKwagher, Revd Theophilus TarbeeKwembe, Revd Simeon ShimaMayange, Revd Simon Friday Mfe, Revd Stephen Shi-AondoNyam, Revd Reuben LubemNyimkor, Revd Clement Lunen-per Torjiga, Revd Paul AkuhaTyokende, VC, Revd Charles BemseerUiligh, Revd James Fredrick Usman, VC, Revd George TerdooUtim, and Revd Abraham TyosharWaku.



Laying of hands by priests on the newly ordained



Bishop Anagbe Laying hands on the newly ordained deacons



Father Simon Tarbo, VC

FATHER SIMON TAVERSHIMA TARBO, VC

Rev. Simon Tavershima Tarbo, VC was born on March 28, 1989 to the family of Noble (Col) Bartholomew T. Tarbo and Noble Sister Lydia Tarbo (KSJI). Rev. hails from Mbagbera, Mbatswam in Vandeikya Local Government Area, Benue State. He had his elementary education at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Nursery and Primary School Makurdi from 1996 to 2001, where he obtained his First School Leaving Certificate. He was admitted at the famous St Joseph's Secondary School Nyiman, Makurdi in 2001 and graduated in 2007. He immediately gained admission at the Benue State University Makurdi for a diploma in History. Thereafter he applied to join the Via Christi Society and he was admitted in 2012 where he

began with a compulsory one-year of postulancy (Spiritual year). During his spiritual year, he taught at the prestigious Mount St Gabriel's Secondary School Makurdi as it was the custom of the Via Christi Society from 2012 to 2013. After spiritual year, he was put forward to study Philosophy at St Thomas Aquinas' Major Seminary Makurdi in October, 2013 where he did only one year and was transferred in 2014 to Albertine Institute of Philosophy, Fadan Kagoma-Kafanchan, Kaduna State, an affiliate of the University of Jos, where he bagged a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Philosophy in 2017. Simon was sent for another compulsory one-year of pastoral experience (Pastoral Year) at the Archdiocese of Abuja during which he worked at

the Communications Office of the Archdiocese for six months and Christ the King's Parish, Kubwa respectively. Rev. Simon was again sent to St Thomas Aquinas' Major Seminary, Makurdi. He was raised to the Sacred Order of the Diaconate by Most Revd Wilfred Chikpa Anagbe, Cmf the Bishop of Makurdi Diocese on 5th January, 2022 in Mbalom. Rev. Simon Tarbo, VC finally graduated from St. Thomas Aquinas' Major Seminary Makurdi with a Bachelor's Degree in Sacred Theology (B.S.T) in June, 2022. During the course of his formation, Rev. Simon Tarbo, VC worked in different diocese around the Abuja Province.

FATHER RAPHAEL TARBO, VC

Rev. Raphael Tarbo, VC was born on 22nd February 1995 to the family of Mr. Joseph Myina Tarbo and Mrs Stella Deilu Tarbo. He hails from Ushongo Local Government Area of Benue State. He spent his elementary formative years in Gboko where his personality attributes were nurtured. At a young age, he attended Auntie Ayam Nursery and Primary School Gboko. Later, he proceeded to the prestigious Mount Saint Gabriel's Secondary School Makurdi where he graduated in 2013, making stellar grades in SSCE.

Rev. Tarbo VC. adjudged being a priest as a noble call; an uncommon opportunity to exude kindness and empathy to others. Sensing God's calling, he applied and was admitted into the Via Christi Society in 2013. During his one-year spiritual formation, he taught at his Alma Mata. To this end, he was sent to study Philosophy at Christ the King's Major Seminary Kafanchan in 2014. In 2018, he graduated and went for a one-year pastoral experience at St Dominick's High

School, Tse-Ayu. Afterwards, Rev. Tarbo, VC began his theology at the prestigious St Thomas Aquinas' Major Seminary Makurdi. In 2023, he was awarded a degree in Sacred Theology from Urbaniana University, Rome. He was ordained a Deacon on 7th January, 2023 at the Divine Mercy Junior Seminary, Kanshio by His Lordship, Most Revd Wilfred Chikpa Anagbe, CMF.



Father Raphael Tarbo, VC

Pope's Message on World Communications Day: AI can Never Replace Wisdom of Human Heart

By Vatican News

Pope Francis has released his message for the 2024 World Day of Social Communications, focusing on the theme: “Artificial Intelligence and the Wisdom of the Heart: Towards a Fully Human Communication”.

Celebrated on 12 May, this year's theme is closely linked to the Pope's message for the World Day of Peace, which was devoted to the development of systems of artificial intelligence (AI).

AI is “radically affecting the world of information and communication and, through it,

certain foundations of life in society,” said the Pope in his Communications Day message, adding that “these changes affect everyone. “How can we remain fully human and guide this cultural transformation to serve a good purpose?” the Pope asked.

In addressing this question, the Holy Father noted that “at this time in history, which risks becoming rich in technology and poor in humanity, our reflections must begin with the human heart.” He started that the heart is, above all, “the inward place of our encounter with God.”

“Wisdom of the heart, then, is the virtue that enables us to integrate the whole and its parts, our

decisions and their consequences, our nobility and our vulnerability, our past and our future, our individuality and our membership within a larger community,” the Pope explained.

The Holy Father reiterated that such wisdom cannot be sought from machines. He further explained that it is not enough to be able to store data, like machines do, but that this data must be made sense of, and “human beings alone” are capable of this. “Depending on the inclination of the heart, everything within our reach becomes either an opportunity or a threat,” he warned.

The pope noted that it is extremely important to know that in the wrong hands, such tools could

lead to “disturbing scenarios.” The Holy Father averred that artificial intelligence must be regulated, as in every human context, “regulation is, of itself, not sufficient.”

Pope Francis therefore called on everyone to grow together, “in humanity and as humanity,” recalling that we are all challenged to make a qualitative leap in order to become “a complex, multiethnic, pluralistic, multi-religious, and multicultural society.”

Bringing his message for World Communications Day to a close, Pope Francis recalled that “it is up to us to decide whether we will become fodder for algorithms or will nourish our hearts with that freedom without which we cannot grow in wisdom.”

Only together, he concluded, can we increase our capacity for discernment and vigilance and for seeing things in the light of their fulfilment.

THE VICE-CHANCELLOR, BENUE STATE UNIVERSITY, PROF. TOR IORAPUU, FSONTA, FNIPR, KSM

Photos by Jude Atakpugh



The VC, Prof. Joe Tor Iorapuu with grand children



L-R Profs. Kenen, Iorapuu, Ijohor, SAN and Mr. Tyagher



The VC Welcomes Prof. Sorkaa with his wife



Prof. Joe Tor Iorapuu in warm handshake with Dr. Tivlumun Nyitse



Prof. Kembe (L) Exchanging pleasantries with Prof. Iorapuu



Prof. Iorapuu and family Members



The Chaplain, GSCC-BSU, Father Ihyula welcoming guests



The chaplaincy Choir



Revd Nick Agule taking the Gospel Reading



Vicar-General Pastoral, Catholic Diocese of Makurdi, Father Iorapuu delivering the homily



Consecration



Justice Kaka'an (rtd) with other congregation



L-R. Profs. Odey, Ada, Saalu, Ubwa, Dr. Keghku and Others



Drs. Banka (back), Alex and Bibiana Ayabam



Prof. Beatrice Ker and Madam Kondoun



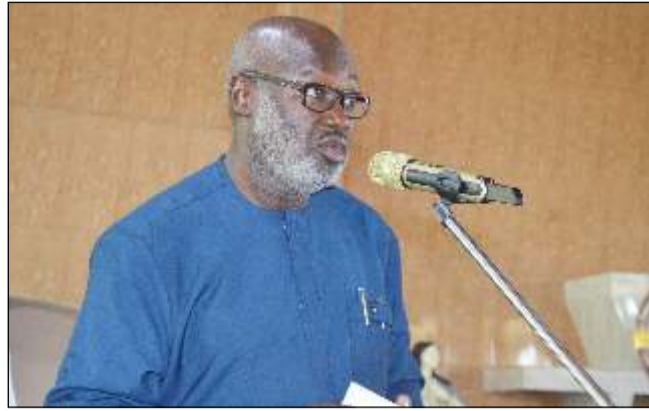
Prof. Iorapuu and Wife during Offertory Procession

FAMILY THANKSGIVING HELD AT THE GOOD SHEPHERD CATHOLIC CHAPLAINCY, ON MONDAY, JANUARY 1, 2024

Photos by Jude Atakpugh



Prof. Iorapuu and family during thanksgiving Procession



Prof. Iorapuu Addressing the Guests



DVC (Admin) Prof. Odey Making a donation on behalf of BSU Management



The Pastoral Chairperson, Prof. Kembe welcoming guests



Mr. Abeto, Representative of SSG Benue State



Revd Nick Agule contributing to the family thanksgiving



Prof. Ubwa and Sorkaa in handshake as Hon. Sorkaa watches



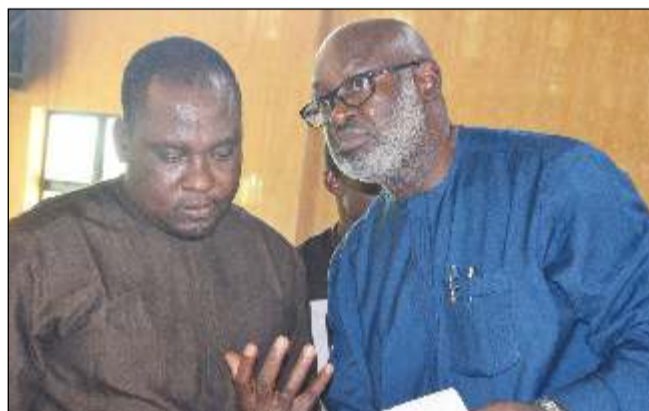
Secretary- General, SU-BSU Speaking on behalf of the students



Front Roll (R-L) Dr. Tsuwa, Hon. Ortese, Mrs. Bija, and others back



L-R Andrew Ayabam, Elaigwu and others



Washima and the VC



The Iorapuu and Priests



Benediction



The Iorapuu, guests and Priests



Mr. Aondona Iorapuu



The VC with Special Guests



The Buffet



The VC Celebrates New Year with Students' Leaders

Dugu encourages young men for priesthood

Rev Barnabas Amachigh

In a joyous ceremony at St. Anthony of Padu's Parish, Zaki-Biam, the diocese of Katsina-Ala celebrated the

diaconate ordination of Atoba Dennis Aondonenge. The event, which took place on the solemnity of the Epiphany of the

Lord, marked a significant milestone for the diocese and the newly ordained deacon. Bishop Isaac Dugu, who presided over the ordination, expressed his delight in adding a dedicated individual to the ranks of his diocesan clergies. In his homily, the Bishop emphasized the importance of young men embracing God's call, particularly to the priesthood, as a means of spreading the message of God to the farthest corners of the world. He therefore called on young men to emulate Atoba.

The solemnity of the Epiphany holds great significance in the Christian calendar; symbolizing the manifestation of Christ to the world. Bishop Dugu drew a parallel between this manifestation and the newly ordained deacon's role in ministry, urging him to be diligent in carrying out his duties. As the diocese of Katsina-Ala welcomes

Revd Atoba Dennis Aondonenge into the diaconal order, the Bishop highlighted the responsibility bestowed upon him to serve the Church and community with unwavering commitment. The chief shepherd also encouraged the newly ordained deacon to embody the teachings of Christ, ensuring that the light of faith continue to shine brightly in the Diocese. Revd Atoba Dennis Aondonenge's journey into the diaconate represents a commitment to a life of service, echoing the Bishop's call for more young men to answer the divine vocation.

The diocese of Katsina-Ala, under the leadership of Bishop Dugu, looks forward to the contributions of Revd Atoba Dennis Aondonenge as he embarks on this new chapter of his spiritual journey to the Church's mission and the spreading of God's message throughout the world.

The Solemnity of Epiphany of the Lord and event of the ordination was on January 7, 2024



Bishop Isaac Dugu and the newly ordained deacon, Revd Atoba Dennis

Dugu Lauds Works of Zealous Pastoral Agents

By Barnabas Amachigh

In a gathering that epitomized comradery and strategic planning, priests and the religious across the Catholic Diocese of Katsina-Ala convened at St Gerard Majella Cathedral, Katsina-Ala for the highly anticipated End-of-Year meeting with the Bishop. The comprehensive session served as a platform for all heads of departments, chaplains, and deans to present detailed reports, encapsulating the growth, achievements and challenges faced throughout the year, and laying out the roadmap for the coming year.

The meeting which began with the Holy Mass had a serene environment as the bishop of the diocese, Most Revd Isaac Dugu made remarks on the importance of transparency, cooperation and shared responsibility among people of God, which is what the pastoral agents in the

diocese had done. He lauded their efforts and sued for more from the good people of the diocese.

During the event, heads of departments presented comprehensive reports that provided a panoramic view of their respective areas of responsibility.

Educational leaders highlighted advancements in curriculum development, academic achievements, and challenges faced by the diocesan schools. The heads of pastoral ministries shared inspiring stories of community engagement, outreach programs and the

impact of their initiatives on the spiritual well-being of the faithful.

In response to the presentations, the Bishop expressed gratitude for the dedication and zeal exhibited by the pastoral agents. He commended those who had shown exceptional commitment to the mission of the Diocese, recognizing their efforts as instrumental in the growth and vitality of the local Church.

The Bishop emphasized the crucial role annual reports usually play in effective diocesan management. He encouraged all priests and religious leaders to view this process as an opportunity for constructive self-assessment and collaboration.

"It is through these reports that I am able to understand the pulse of our Diocese, identify areas that require attention, and appreciate the remarkable strides we are making together," He noted. "Your transparency and commitment are the cornerstones of our collective success," he added

The event was held on December 4, 2023.



Bishop Isaac Dugu, Priests and Deacons of Katsina-Ala Diocese

Onitsha gets new leaders of Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

By Sughnen Isaac and Rev Barnabas Amachigh

On the solemnity of the Immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Archdiocese of Onitsha inaugurated new administration of Sisters of the immaculate Heart of Mary. The inauguration and blessing was a mark of the official commencement of the religious order under the leadership of Mother Maureen Akabogu.

The Sisters, elected during the 12th General Chapter in August 2023, were entrusted with the responsibility to carry forward the sacred work they had initiated. The Mass, presided over by Most Revd Isaac Bundepuun Dugu, the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Katsina-Ala, was conducted with the gracious permission of the Metropolitan and the Archbishop of Onitsha, Most Rev. Valerian Okeke.

In his homily, Bishop Dugu emphasized the significance of the Sisters' commitment to serving the Church and the community. The inauguration ceremony was a spiritual spectacle, resonating with prayers, hymns, and a profound sense of divine purpose.

Mother Maureen Akabogu therefore, expressed her gratitude for the trust placed in them for the service to the Church. She outlined the key principles

that will guide their mission, emphasizing a continued dedication to education, healthcare, and community outreach.

The Sisters' unwavering commitment to their calling and the guidance of Bishop Dugu instill confidence that their endeavors will leave an indelible mark on the Onitsha Archdiocese and all the Catholic faithful.

As the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, this inauguration served as a beacon of hope and renewal, reinforcing the spirit of service and devotion within the Catholic community.



Bishop Isaac Dugu, Priests and Religious of the Immaculate Heart



Cross-section of the Sisters of Immaculate Heart of Mary

Salesians of Don Bosco Thinking of Benue, 3 Ordained at Aliade

By Emmanuel Ogbu

The Salesian Religious Order, known as Society of Don Bosco SDB, has begun making inroads into the middle belt region of Nigeria. They had three of their deacons ordained priests by Bishop Wilfred Anagbe CMF of Makurdi Diocese. The three priests of the Order of the Salesians of Don Bosco were Revd

Peter Gbertyo, who happens to come from Aliade, Revd Bannah Richard, from Liberia and Revd Christian Ayogo from Enugu.

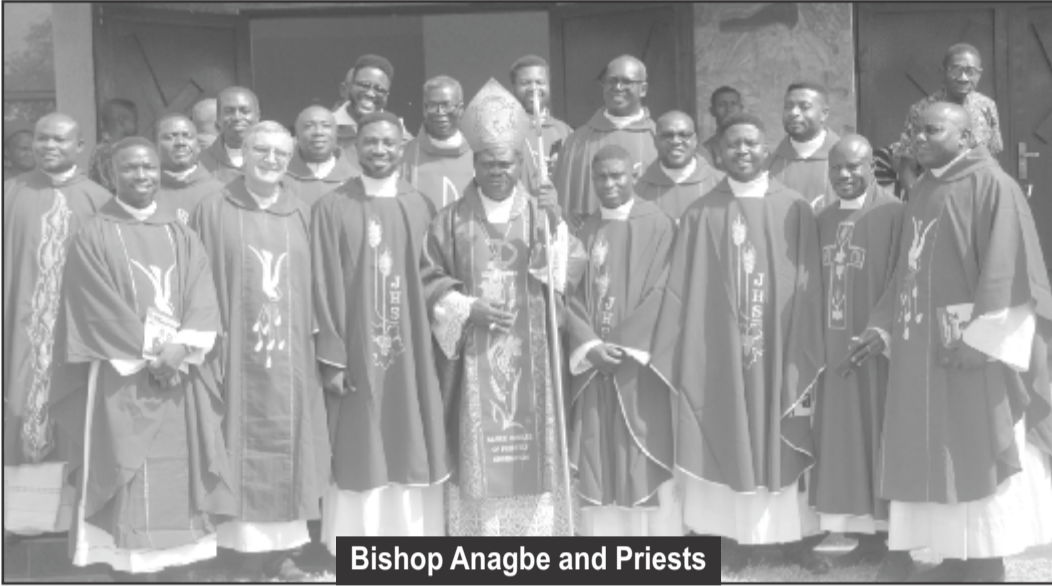
The Bishop thanked the Superiors of SDB for choosing Makurdi Diocese and the awesome edifice of SS. Peter and Paul for the ceremony. He encouraged every priest, particularly the newly ordained to preach the gospel of Christ and to emulate his teachings,

abstaining from any act that could hinder the evangelical work for which they had been ordained. The provincial superior Father Jorge Mario Crisafulli SDB in appreciation to Bishop Anagbe said the ordination could be the beginning of their moving into Makurdi and the Middle Belt and thanked the people of Benue State for their warmth and hospitality. The Salesians are a family of young

men and women founded by an Italian Catholic priest, Father John Bosco, consisting of priests and brothers trained to do the ordinary things in extra-ordinary way and strive to become saints.

They specialise in youth apostolate. The events of the ordination of these young men will no doubt remain fresh on the minds of the families to which they belong as many came, saw, and professed the Lord's glory.

The ordination was on December 16, 2023 at the SS Peter and Paul's Parish, Aliade.



Bishop Anagbe and Priests



Bishop Anagbe Laying hands on the newly ordained priests

Pope Recognizes the Impact of Catholicism In Tivland- Confers Papal Knighthood

By Akor Andrew

Pope Francis has recognized the contribution of Catholicism in Tivland through a historic gesture, awarding papal medals to an unprecedented number of lay men and women from Gboko the capital city of Tivland. This recognition was conveyed by the bishop of Gboko Diocese, Most Revd William Avenya while conferring the Papal honours on the recipients during Mass at the cathedral of St. John.

Aule, pledged their absolute loyalty to the church and promised to do more for the Church and the larger society. The papal honourees were in two categories of equal importance. In his remarks the governor, Father Hyacinth Alia described the recipients as worthy sons and daughters of the state. He promised to continue to partner with the Church in the provision of democratic dividends.

The honourees were elevated to the order of Dames of St, Gregory the Great, Knights of

directly by the Pope as supreme pontiff and is intended to honour Roman Catholic lay people who are actively involved in the life of the Church, while Dame is an honorific title and feminine form of knighthood conferred by the Pope to female knights.

Those who received the papal honours were: Sir Michael Mtomga Aule, (KSM, KSG), Dame Philomena Kyaagba Agum, Dame Theresa Iember Atser, (KSJI), Dame Jane Mwuese Asagh, (KSJI), Dame Maria Feese, LSM, Sir Gabriel Gbanongun Shosum, (KSJI, KSG), Sir Augustine Akaanan Aule, (KSJI, KSG), Sir Athanasius Iordye Kyausu, (KSG) Sir George Doolumun Welgba, (KSJI, KSG) Sir Shiishi Philip Gyer (KSM, KSG), Sir Augustine Kwaghtse Kuma, (KSS) Sir Hon. Cosmas Idye, OFR, (KSS), Sir Raymond Hemem Ihyembe (KSS), Sir Stephen Tersoo Iyorshe Orngudwem (KSS). Others were Sir Samuel Tyonongo Ukura, Sir Frank Kumbul Aul (KSS), Sir John Terhembra Tsoho (KSS), Sir Bernard Iyorlyam Hom, SAN (KSS), Sir Titus Terhembra Agbecha Rtd, (KSS), Sir Edward Kunav Ashiekaa (KSS), Prof. Member George-Genyi, Bro Michael Kperkyaa, KSM, Mrs Jennifer Soohembra Sende, Prof Charity Angya, Stephen-Mary Azati, Sr.

Gloria Olajumoke Wilson, EHJ, FCA, Sr. Maria Daniela Farcas, SJR, Sr. Maria Nkem, SJR, Tyoor Charles Terkimbi Uzuativ, Prof. Stephen Ior-Amo Dugguh, Timorothy Tsuwe Sule, were recipients of the Pro Ecclesia Et Pontifice award.

The bishop of Wukari Diocese, Most Revd Mark Nzukwein used the occasion to call on those in leadership positions, particularly Christians, to rule with the fear of God and ensure they always put the people first in their policy. He also challenged the public to change the negative perception on those in positions of authority. He called on those who have been invested with the papal honours to always speak out against oppression, bad governance, ethnicity, divide-and-rule tactics, political and religious killings and sleaze among political office holders responsible for the ill state of the country.

In a chart with *Catholic Star Newspaper*, some of the honourees acknowledged that they had worked fervently for the Church but never thought that the Church would recognize them in this glorious manner!

Among them was Dame Theresa Atser who said that she was particularly honoured by the recognition that her modest contribution was noticed. She therefore promised to rededicate her time more to the service of the Church and humanity.

All these took place on December 29, 2023 at Saint John's Cathedral, Gboko.



Cross-section of Papal Knights at the Investiture

Bishop Avenya described the conferment of these Papal Honours as an impetus to further impact on the Church and society.

Bishop Avenya challenged the honourees to see the honour bestowed on them by the Holy Father as both recognition and a call for a better service to the church apart from the primary role they have been playing in the defense of the Church. He encouraged them to resist the temptation of seeing themselves as members of a club of a privileged few, but rather as a signpost for selfless service and empowerment to promote, protect and project the faith they profess more vigorously.

On behalf of the honourees, Sir Michael

St. Gregory the Great and Knights of the order of Pope Sylvester. In effect, they were presented with the swords and medals as insignia of their elevation as papal knights. The Papal honour is an expression of gratitude for service to the church and the recipients' contributions to the growth of their home dioceses and the church in general.

The order of St. Gregory the Great was established by Pope Gregory XVI on 1st September, 1831 by the papal brief Quod Summis; it is awarded in four classes with military and civil division.

The order of St. Sylvester Pope and Martyr is one of five orders of Knighthood awarded



Father Moses Iorapuu (4th from left), Sir Michael Aule and family

AT ST. DOMINICK'S HIGH SCHOOL TSE-AYU

By: His Lordship, Most REVD Wilfred Chikpa Anagbe CMF

Photo by: Boniface Ella



Bishop Commissioning the sport facilities assisted by other priests present



Bishop blessing some sporting equipment on the Basketball court



Bishop blessing and sprinkling Holy Water on the Basketball court



A section of learners beside the basketball court



Bishop playing the basketball



Bishop Anagbe take a shot on target



Bishop in handshake with headboy Onehi Peter



Bishop, priests, and worshippers



Bishop and other priests watching band group display



Bishop Anagbe among other Catholic Priests



Head boy Dugeri Kelvin playing badminton with a priest



L-R: Fathers Peter Apagher, Alexander Akaa and Philip Apuu



Principal Father Philip Apuand Justice Cosmas Idye



Fathers Shokua, Apagher, and Apuu with CWO Members



A section of learners beside the badminton court



Father Shokua and Father Apuu



Father Iorapuu discussing with Parent at the occasion



Bishop, priests, Staff, and learners outside Fr. Murphy's grave

DG, Benue State Education Quality Assurance Agency Unveils plan to upgrade Schools in the State

By David Shimayegh

The Director General of the Benue State Education Quality Assurance Agency, Dr. Francis Terna, KSM has recently addressed a team of education stakeholders at Government College, Makurdi on the importance of quality education as a fundamental right and powerful tool for individual empowerment and societal progress. He highlighted the agency's commitment to excellence, innovation and inclusivity in fulfilling its mandate. Drawing attention to the role and

several departments, each headed by a director. These departments include Quality Assurance, Private Education and Special Programs, Planning, Research and Statistics, Accounts, and Human Resources.

The functions of the agency encompass various aspects of education quality assurance such as maintaining policies and guidelines, registering private schools, obtaining relevant data, ensuring teachers' quality and professionalism, developing a harmonious school calendar, evaluating public and private education

Dr. Terna further highlighted the agency's ongoing monitoring efforts, particularly in assessing the resumption of schools for the second term. He stated that in the course of the monitoring exercise, the agency observed that public schools have poor conducive learning environments, marking of registers, lesson planning, and actual lesson delivery. To address these issues, the agency set to collaborate with other education-related agencies to conduct regular monitoring visit and extend the assessment to schools in rural areas.

The agency had also identified breaches in the approvals given for the establishment of some private schools. An agreement had been signed with a Tech company to carry out a recertification exercise for both private and public schools in the state. This exercise was aimed at gathering data on compliance with establishment

guidelines and will result in the issuance of Certificates of Consent to compliant schools. Schools that do not meet the standards will be advised to upgrade their structures within a specified period, while those significantly below the standard will be shut down.

Moreover, Dr. Terna emphasized the need for collaborating with educational stakeholders; He stated clearly the importance of preparing students for the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. He also drew attention to areas such as artificial intelligence, nanotechnology, biotechnology, autonomy, cyber security, space technology, and 5G in line with global trends.

He therefore urged stakeholders to support the efforts of the agency, assuring them that the agency was committed to reducing corruption and unnecessary burdens on school owners through harmonized payment processes and clear communication channels.



Dr. Francis Terna inspecting schools

structure of the agency, the director stated that the agency has assumed the functions and responsibilities previously carried out by the Departments of Quality Assurance, Planning, Research and Statistics of the Ministry of Education as well as other related departments. He emphasized that the agency had been structured into

institutions, accrediting schools for external examinations, and producing an annual State of Education Report. The agency also investigates matters affecting learners, parents, staff, and management of educational institutions, and collaborates with other stakeholders to ensure every child receive a quality education.



Dr. Francis Terna, KSM

There will never be another King Shuluwa

continued from back page

those who spoke to Catholic Star said that he was a bridge builder and reconciled many politicians; he also helped Father Moses Adasu to victory as the first priest to be a governor and was doing the same for Father Hyacinth Alia as governor to restore peace in Sankera when the cold hands of death whisked him away.

King Shuluwa was so charming and had the gift of a great listener, something not common with politicians. He was one Tiv man who spoke truth to power and did not easily court diplomacy when it came to the issues of injustice. In fact, King Shuluwa could poetically play with his names and those of others to energize political campaigns when things became tough! The older generation will

remember the pounding sound of "Abu King Shuluwa" and the "Yar Adua," and surely when he meets Father Adasu in the other world, the first thing would be: "You telling us that you were Father Moses the Messiah to liberate Benue, 32 years after waiting, one Joshua came in the person of Father Hyacinth Alia, so we made him the governor to finish the journey you started and lead us into the Promised Land."

That is the man, Abu King Shuluwa. His last prayer was for the governor to restore peace in Sankera Land even if that meant his death!

Governor Hyacinth Alia will answer King Shuluwa's prayer!

His burial programme has been released as follows:

6th February, 2024: Night of Tributes,

Nnam Hall Complex, Makurdi at 4 p.m. - 10.00 pm.

7th February, 2024: Wake at Family House New GRA, Makurdi, 6.00 p.m.

8th February, 2024: Requiem Mass at the Catholic Youth Centre, Makurdi at 10.00 a.m. Thereafter, his remains will be taken to the country House at Takor Village in Ikyurav-Tiev II, Katsina-Ala LGA.

9th February, 2024: Valedictory session by Sankera Area Traditional Council at the College Auditorium, College of Education Katsina-Ala at 10.00 a.m.

Wake at St Gérard Majella's Cathedral, Katsina-Ala at 6.00 p.m.

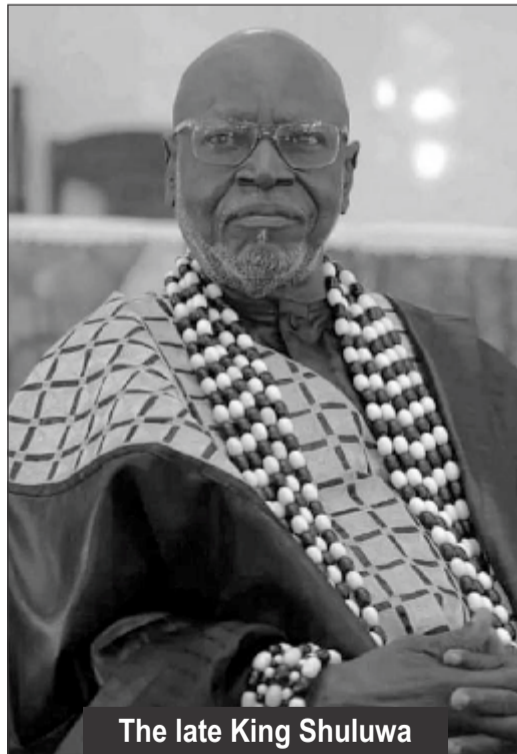
10th February 2024: funeral orations at the same venue 8.00 a.m. - 10.00 a.m.

Holy Mass at 10.00 a.m.

Interment after Mass at the Tor Sankera Garden

Royal Cemetery, Katsina-Ala Town.

11th February 2024: Thanksgiving/Outing Sunday at the Catholic Youth Centre at 8.00 a.m. Mass.



The late King Shuluwa

Catholic Star Mourns Richard Maza

By Emmanuel Alagh

With gratitude to God, the Catholic Star Newspaper again mourns one of her correspondents, Richard Maza whose untimely death came barely three months

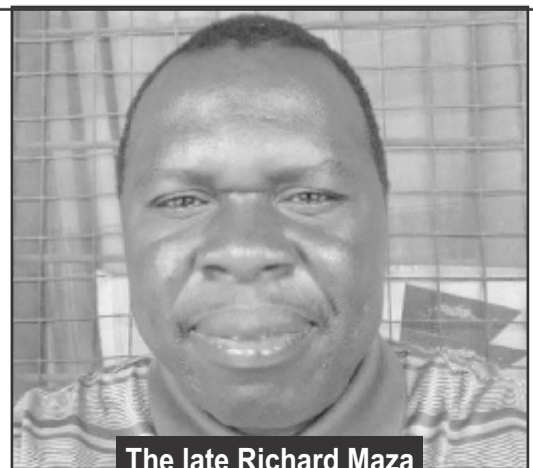
after the demise of her long-standing columnist, Father Ambrose Ejeh.

Until his death, the late Maza was a reporter with the Catholic Star from Katsina-Ala Diocese and was committed

to his duty.

The funeral programme will be released in due course.

Adieu Richard!



The late Richard Maza

INTERVIEW WITH THE PRINCIPAL OF ST. DOMINICK'S HIGH SCHOOL, FATHER PHILIP APUU

This is a text of interview with the principal of St. Dominick's High School, Tse Ayu, Makurdi, Father Philip Apuu, held on January, 3, 2024 at St. Dominick's High School Tse Ayu. In the interview, the principal bares mind on how the management of the school is wont to developing, upgrading the school to modern academic practices.

Catholic Star: How would you describe your experience as principal of St. Dominick's High School, Tse Ayu.

Principal: As the principal of St. Dominick's High School, Tse Ayu, the journey has been occasioned by a number of experiences, challenges and achievements. Leading this esteemed institution has been an honor that comes with tremendous responsibility and joy in equal measure.

In the realm of academic excellence, we've strived to create an environment that stimulates intellectual curiosity and nurtures a passion for learning. Our curriculum, continuously reviewed and updated, aligns with both global educational standards and the specific needs of our student body. Through strategic initiatives and faculty training programmes, we've embraced

innovative pedagogical approaches, incorporating project-based learning, interdisciplinary studies, and technological integration to ensure our students are not just consumers of knowledge but active participants in their educational journey.

However, the essence of education extends beyond textbooks and classrooms. Fostering a holistic environment where each student feels supported and empowered to grow personally, morally, and socially is paramount. Our commitment to holistic education encompasses a robust system of pastoral care, extracurricular activities, and leadership development programs. We prioritize the mental health and well-being of our students, offering counseling services and creating a nurturing atmosphere where students feel heard, understood and supported.

Catholic Star: Can you do an assessment of your stewardship so far as principal of the school?

Principal: Reflecting on my stewardship, I've sought to cultivate a culture of collaboration, respect, and inclusivity among our faculty, students, and the wider community. Building strong relationships with parents, alumni, local organizations, and the broader diocesan community

has been instrumental in our collective success. Engaging stakeholders in our vision for the school has allowed us to garner support for various initiatives, from infrastructure improvements to academic scholarships.

Catholic Star: What plans do you have for the school as one of the leading educational institutions in the diocese to continue the provision of quality education?

Principal: Looking towards the future, our plans for St. Dominick's are ambitious yet purposeful. We aim to further elevate our educational standards by leveraging emerging technologies and methodologies, encouraging critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity. Expanding our vocational and skill-based programs will equip our students with practical competencies essential for success in a dynamic job market.

Additionally, we're committed to enhancing our infrastructure to create a conducive learning environment. Renovations, modernization of facilities, and the development of specialized spaces for arts, sciences, and technology are on our agenda. Our goal is to provide an inspiring physical space that complements our academic initiatives and fosters a

sense of pride and ownership among our students.

As a premier educational institution within the diocese, our mission remains steadfast – not to only sustain but also amplify our commitment to providing a transformative educational experience. By continually innovating, evolving, and adapting, to modern academics practices, we aim to prepare our students to thrive as future leaders, equipped with the knowledge, skills and values necessary to navigate an ever-changing world. Thank You.



Father Philip Apuu

A Moment Long Awaited; Anagbe Blesses Tomb of Late Murphy, Commissions Sporting Equipment

The commissioning of sports equipment built by St Dominick's High School Tse-Ayu and the consecration of the tomb of the late father Michael Murphy built by Rtd. Commodore Agbecha have been described by Bishop Wilfred Chikpa Anagbe CMF of Makurdi Diocese as a moment that has long been awaited, the bishop said this in a homily to carry out the dual commissioning.

In his speech, the bishop called on the government of Benue state through the ministry of Education and Knowledge Management to ensure that schools in the state have sporting facilities as it will help identify talents. He noted that, the instances where schools approved by the ministry do not have these facilities, and sometimes even the sites for these schools are usually habitable.

Speaking further the prelate assured the people of his commitment to create a conducive learning environment for schools

in the diocese and this, he said, has begun with the first phase by the installation of solar energy at St Joseph's Secondary School Nyiman, Our Lady of Consolation Agan, Holy Child Secondary School Adeke and Our Lady of Mt.Carmel's Secondary School to put an end, to the issue of power outage and to enhance students to read their books without hindrance. Bishop Anagbe also called on the people to continue to pray for those in positions of authority to succeed and desist from the "pull-him-down" syndrome based on

parochial reasoning.

While blessing the tomb of the late father Murphy, bishop Anagbe charged both staff and students to make it a point of commitment to say at least one Hail Mary and the Lords' prayer every day for the repose of the soul of the founder of the school. He also charged students and staff of the school to make judicious use of the sporting facilities to improve on their sporting skills.

Speaking with the Catholic Star correspondent, Rtd Air commodore Titus Agbecha, said he was moved to build the tomb

because of the influence of the deceased on the lives of those who crossed parts with him. He maintained that, although he was a Christian before knowing the late Murphy, he became a better Christian after he had encountered him.

Speaking on the sporting facilities in the school, the deputy director of education services, Makurdi Diocese, Sr. Mary Ibe, SON said the directorate will ensure that schools in the diocese are equipped with standard sporting facilities and thanked the bishop for creating a conducive learning environment for schools in the diocese.

The principal of the school, Father Philip Apuu said the school will leverage on the facilities to discover more talents. He thanked the bishop for graciously granting their request for the facilities and the attention he has overtime given to the school which has resulted in the massive rehabilitation of infrastructures at the school and called on the students to make maximal use of the facilities. The sports facilities commissioned were basketball, badminton and Volleyball courts.

The event was held on January 12, 2024.





SUNDAY REFLECTIONS

By

Father Terungwa Tor

28th January, 2024

Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time Year B

Theme: Embracing the Authority of Christ's Teachings

1. First Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-20
2. Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 7:32-35
3. Gospel: Mark 1:21-28

Lesson 1: The Authority of the Prophets and Christ

In the first reading from the book of Deuteronomy, Moses speaks of a future prophet who will arise among the people, and God declares, "I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him." This prophecy finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ, who comes not only as a teacher but as the very embodiment of God's Word. Jesus teaches with a unique authority that astounds the people in the Gospel reading. His authority is not derived from human knowledge or eloquence but from His divine nature. As followers of Christ, we are called to recognize and submit to the authority of His teachings, knowing that they lead us to truth, freedom, and abundant life.

Lesson 2: Embracing a Single-hearted Devotion

In the second reading from Paul's letter to the Corinthians, he speaks about the value of single-hearted devotion to the Lord. Paul encourages the Corinthians, and by extension, all believers, to be free from worldly distractions and anxieties, allowing them to focus wholeheartedly on the things of God. This is not a call to abandon our responsibilities or relationships but to prioritize our lives in such a way that we can give our undivided attention to the teachings and will of Christ. By embracing single-hearted devotion, we create space in our lives to listen attentively to Christ's teachings and

to allow them to shape our thoughts, actions, and priorities.

Lesson 3: Responding to Christ's Authority with Faith and Obedience

In the Gospel reading from Mark, we witness an extraordinary event where Jesus teaches in the synagogue and confronts a man possessed by an unclean spirit. The people are amazed at His authority and the power with which He commands the unclean spirit to leave the man. This demonstrates not only Christ's authority over evil but also His authority in teaching the truth. The response of the people is one of astonishment and recognition that Jesus' teachings carry the weight of divine authority. As disciples of Christ, we are called to respond to His teachings with faith and obedience, trusting that His words are life-giving and lead us closer to God. By surrendering ourselves to His authority, we allow His teachings to transform our lives and bring about true liberation from the bondage of sin and darkness.

4th February, 2024

Fifth Sunday of Ordinary Time Year B

Theme: Responding to God's Call with Faith and Action

1. First Reading: Job 7:1-4, 6-7
2. Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23
3. Gospel: Mark 1:29-39

Lesson 1: Trusting in God's Presence in Our Suffering

In the first reading from the book of Job, we encounter the story of a man who is experiencing immense suffering and anguish. Job laments the brevity and hardships of human life, expressing his deep sorrow. This reading reminds us that suffering is a part of the human condition, and at times, we may

find ourselves questioning God's presence and purpose in our pain. However, even in our trials, we are called to trust in God's presence and His plan for our lives. Just as Job eventually finds solace and restoration in God's faithfulness, we too can find hope and strength in knowing that God walks with us through every season of life, including the most challenging ones.

Lesson 2: Responding to God's Call with Zeal and Sacrifice

In the second reading from Paul's letter to the Corinthians, we witness Paul's unwavering commitment to proclaiming the Gospel. He declares, "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!" Paul's words remind us of the urgency and responsibility we have as disciples of Christ to share the Good News with others. We are called to respond to God's call with zeal and sacrifice, willing to go beyond our comfort zones and make ourselves available for His mission. Just as Paul became all things to all people in order to save some, we too are called to adapt and engage with others in a way that leads them closer to Christ. This requires a willingness to set aside our own preferences and desires for the sake of the Gospel.

Lesson 3: Seeking Jesus and Embracing His Healing Presence

In the Gospel reading from Mark, we witness the healing ministry of Jesus. He responds to the needs of the people, curing Simon's mother-in-law and many others who were sick or possessed by demons. The people of the town recognize the power and authority of Jesus' presence and bring to Him all who are in need. This teaches us the importance of seeking Jesus and embracing His healing presence in our lives. Just as the people in the Gospel sought Jesus for physical healing, we too are invited to approach Him with our spiritual, emotional, and physical needs. Jesus is always ready to bring healing, restoration, and wholeness to our lives when we come to Him with faith and trust.

11th February, 2024

Sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time Year B

Theme: Living a Life of Holiness and Wholeness

1. First Reading: Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46
2. Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1
3. Gospel: Mark 1:40-45

Lesson 1: Recognizing Our Need for

Healing and Wholeness

In the Gospel reading from Mark, we encounter the story of a leper who approaches Jesus, seeking healing. Leprosy was not only a physical ailment but also a condition that isolated individuals from society, making them feel unclean and unworthy. The leper's plea to Jesus, "If you wish, you can make me clean," reveals his recognition of his need for healing and restoration. This reminds us that we too have areas in our lives that need healing and wholeness. It may be physical, emotional, or spiritual wounds that we carry. Like the leper, let us approach Jesus with humility and faith, trusting that He has the power to make us clean and whole.

Lesson 2: Living a Life of Holiness in All Things

In the second reading from Paul's letter to the Corinthians, he encourages the believers to live a life of holiness in all things. Paul reminds them that whatever they do, whether eating or drinking, should be done for the glory of God. This challenges us to examine our own lives and consider if our actions, choices, and attitudes reflect the holiness to which we are called. Are we living in a way that brings glory to God? Are we mindful of our words, thoughts, and actions, seeking to honor God in all aspects of our lives? Let us strive to live with a conscious awareness of God's presence and a desire to align our lives with His will.

Lesson 3: Embracing the Call to Wholeness and Restoration

In the first reading from the book of Leviticus, we encounter the regulations concerning leprosy and the need for those affected to be separated from the community. This was not only for the protection of others but also for the opportunity of restoration and wholeness. The person with leprosy had to undergo a process of examination and purification before being readmitted into the community. This reminds us that God desires our wholeness and restoration. He invites us to come to Him with our brokenness, our sins, and our wounds, so that He can heal us and restore us to a place of belonging and community. Let us embrace this call to wholeness and restoration, allowing God to work in our lives and make us new.

Ukum Chairman regains freedom

By Maurice Ikpakegh

Rev. Gideon Haanongon, the chairman of Ukum Local Government Area of Benue State, who was abducted two weeks ago regained freedom on Wednesday, January 24.

According to media reports, Troops of 72 Special Force Battalion under 401 Special Brigade commanded by Brig. Gen. A. Rabi rescued Haanongon and his personal assistant who were kidnapped on their way to attend the burial of the late Ter Katsina-Ala.

In the words of the chairman, "Each day, the soldiers will come shooting but they manoeuvred their way through a bush path and hid us inside a river. The soldiers destroyed their camps and they kept moving us to another place.

At a point, they told me that these soldiers were disturbing them because of me and that the governor had appealed to them to release me and he would forgive them. They said I should tell the governor to keep to his words and get them out of the bush. So, at 8pm on Wednesday, we crossed a stream and trekked a

very long distance almost like from Makurdi to Abinsi and they removed the blindfold and asked me to take a path that leads to Zaki-Biam."

"But I recognized the village which is Tse Wombo because my daughter is married there. I must appreciate immensely the effort of the military because it was their persistent pressure that made the kidnapers to release me. Also, the Special adviser to Governor Hyacinth Alia on Security Lt. Col. Alexander Igbaya Ashungu (Retd) played a significant role in my release."

The release of the victims signals hope for the people of Sankera whose paramount ruler, the Tor Sankera, the late Abu King Shuluwa had appealed to the governor at that burial to heed to the cries of these boys and help them abandon their way of life and return to normal life.

Unfortunately the Tor Sankera who begged the governor and pledged his life for the sake of peace among the Sankera people died three days after that burial and a day after holding a peace meeting with all the traditional rulers of Sankera. It is our prayer that the death of the Tor Sankera will become the expiation for peace.

Makurdi-Enugu Road; End of Agony for Commuters

By Emmanuel Alagh

of works, Engr. Dave Umahi is a rising hope for all travelers. It can be recalled that the previous administration of President Muhammadu Buhari had started the construction which unfortunately did not cross the Benue River, leaving the rest part of the state and other areas in a deplorable condition.

In view of this recent development, the Benue State governor, Father Hyacinth Aliahad expressed his appreciation to President Bola Ahmed Tinubu and Dave Umahi for their gesture that the

approval for the dualisation of the road is a development strive which shows that the Tinubu led-administration has the Benue people at heart.

The governor gave his word of appreciation at Apir, Makurdi local government area during the flag-off of the road construction project.

He assured the Ministry of Works and the contractor handling the project, China Harbour Engineering Company Limited (CHEC) of the State Government's support and partnership to ensure the project is completed within the specified time.

Governor Alia who also appreciated God for granting the state a new leaf under his watch, thanked the people of the state for their patience and called on them to continue to support his administration and that of President Ahmed Tinubu for the overall progress of the state and country.

While expressing his confidence and belief in China Harbour Engineering Company the governor charged the people of the area and the state in general, to support the contractor in the area of security and other ways they could, for speedy delivery of the job.

Earlier in his speech during the flag-off, the Minister of Works, Engr. Dave Umahi, commended governor Alia for his determination to develop the state, given his numerous visits to his office in Abuja. The minister also appreciated president Tinubu for this wonderful development.

He gave assurance that work on the road project will kick off in full swing soonest.

On their part, the CHEC team promised to do their best to deliver a good job on the 266.4km road project.

The event occurred on Thursday, January 24, 2024

Benue State.



Catholic Star

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Reflections Father Moses Aondover IORAPUU

TWO 'TARBOS' WERE FINALLY ORDAINED ON THE SAME DAY



Fathers Simon & Raphael Tarbo during thanksgiving

St. Mary's Church North Bank, Makurdi, Benue State, witnessed a throng wild with joy as Bishop Wilfred Chikpa Anagbe, CMF of Makurdi

Diocese ordained priests and deacons for Makurdi and the Via Christi. The ordination was indeed a mark of God's divine design for His chosen ones: Revd

Simon Tavershima Tarbo VC, who was dropped on two previous occasions, and Revd Raphael Tarbo VC who was dropped last year. Although they are from different families, fate had an appointment to unite them.

In his homily, the bishop underscored the mystery of the vocation to the priesthood and appealed to parents and family members to always stand by the priests on prayers. He reminded the young people that the Lord was constantly inviting young men to make themselves available for the service in his vineyard to win souls for the kingdom. Anagbe, therefore, charged the newly ordained to be faithful workers of the church and reminded them that accepting the priesthood was a commitment to teach the truth as exemplified by Christ. According to him, as the number of priests increases, so is the demand for ministers who will remain faithful to the vows they make and not lead the lay faithful astray.

The prelate further thanked the parish priest of St Mary's, Father Titus Igyeseh and

parishioners of the church for their commitment, particularly on the aspects of spiritual growth and infrastructural development which had made a haven for the hosting of the ordination. He acknowledged with appreciation the support of all the parents of the priests and deacons and other sponsors, especially Hon Mrs Regina Akume, who was a benefactress to one of the candidates. The bishop also noted that it was the first time an event of this nature had taken place at St Mary's since her elevation to the status of a parish in 1986.

Those ordained priests of the Via Christi Order were Revd Raphael Tarbo, VC, and Revd Simon Tarbo, VC. The ordained deacons for diocesan priesthood and the Via Christi were eighteen, and they were; Revds Frederick Usman, Joshua Abiem, Stephen Aondona, Joseph Akume, Paul Tyokende, Abraham Waku, George Utim, Clement Torjiga, Peter Adikpe, Aaron Aondoemba, Stephen Nyam, Charles Uiligh, Reuben Nyimkor, Simon Mfe, Theopilus Kwembe, Matthew Kwagher, and Simon Mayange.

There will never be another King Shuluwa



The late King Shuluwa

By David Shimayegh
The late Tor Sankera, a first-class chief in Benue State Nigeria, Abu Kingsley Shuluwa, has been described by many as one of

the last charming, charismatic, and electric politician left among the older generation of Tiv Greats to die and that there would never be another like him. Many of...

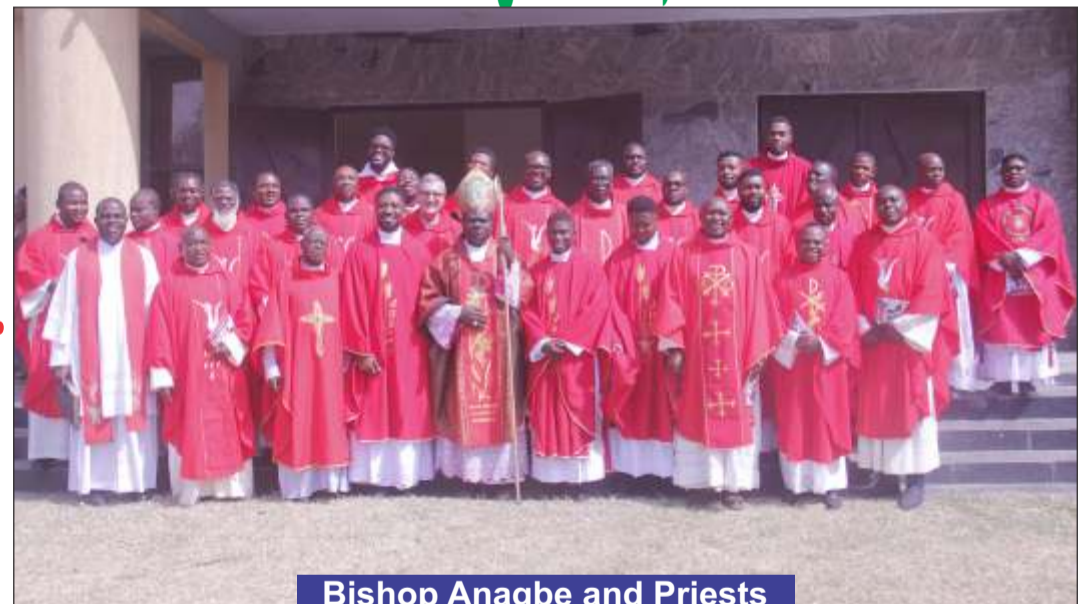
contd on page 13

Catholic Star Mourns Richard Maza



The late Richard Maza

Salesians of Don Bosco thinking of Benue, 3 Ordained at Aliade



Bishop Anagbe and Priests

BSU: Generosity triggers divine favours. Bishop tells VC



Vice Chancellor, Tor Iorapuu, priests and dignitaries at the thanksgiving

Dugu encourages young men for priesthood

DG, Benue State Education Quality Assurance Agency Unveils plan to upgrade Schools in the State

With Gratitude To God Almighty
THE CONGREGATION OF RELIGIOUS OF MARY
IMMACULATE CLARETIAN MISSIONARY SISTERS (RMI)
Cordially Invite

TO THE
Profession of Perpetual Vows
of
Sr. Faeren Felicia Kwaghvihi, RMI

By His Lordship Most Revd. Wilfred Chikpa Anagbe, CMF
Bishop, Catholic Diocese of Makurdi

Thursday 28th February, 2024 | 10:00am Prompt

THANKSGIVING MASS
Date: 4th February, 2024 | Venue: St. Ignatius Quasi-Parish, Ukpo - Ayer Abalam | Time: 10:00am

RSVP: 08101833394, 08032024487