

## **HISTORY OF GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL AGULU (ROSA MYSTICA HIGH SCHOOL AGULU)**

Girls' High School, Agulu, formerly named Catholic Girls' Secondary School Agulu was founded in 1966 by late Archbishop Charles Heery C.S. SP. Archbishop of Onitsha.

The site of Girls' High School is the former Practising Teachers' College. In 1946 it was converted to lower Elementary Training College by name St. John Bosco's College Agulu. The site was formerly a big forest uninhabited and dreaded by people. It is the highest peak at Agulu. The initial clearing and lease of land was done by Rev. Fr. Lidan, who was the Parish Priest of Adazi-Nnukwu. The college was owned exclusively by the Catholic Mission and it was headed by Rev. Fathers\_ Rev. Fr. Halping, Rev. Fr. Chamberline, Fr. Regan and finally by Rev. Fr. Edward Hurley\_ all were Holy Ghost Fathers from Kimage Manor in Ireland. Mr Nwabugwu and Mr E.C. Ezeobi also helped in the Administration of the school.

Rev. Fr. Edward Hurley made St Anthony's college famous by discipline, high academic standards and excellence in sports. He constructed most of the buildings but the most outstanding constructions are the games field and Hurley Hall. He spent himself for the interest of the school. He had a very powerful personality and his presence permeated into every nook and corner. His good influence on his students is seen in the high integrity and conscientiousness of former St Anthony's students. Fr Hurley died in active service in this school in August 1962. May his noble and great soul rest in perfect peace. Amen.

In 1965, the Irish Sisters of St. John of God took over the administration of the school named it "Catholic Girl's Secondary School Agulu". The compound was very neat and beautifully decorated with flowers but this was short lived because soon the Nigerian civil war began in 1967 and the beauty of the compound was completely destroyed. The Nigerian soldiers came into Agulu and occupied the school in 1968. They were driven out by Biafran soldiers who equally in their turn occupied the school. Towards the end of the war in early 1970, when the Biafrans lost the war, the Nigerian soldiers came in again and occupied the school. With subsequent occupation of the school by soldiers, the school was completely ruined. The school chapel was desecrated and turned into a court. The Nigerian soldiers refused to quit the school even after repeated appeal to the highest quarters. They stayed even till 1975. The school took refuge in Agulu Town Hall. This Occupation of the school by soldiers left the school buildings and the school compound in a very pitiable condition, and was the cause of non- reconstruction of the school when the State Government poured money into schools for reconstruction.

In 1970, the Est Central State Government took over all schools in the State and the name Catholic Girls' Secondary School became Girls' High School, Agulu. The first Principal after the civil war was Mr Bernard Nduegbunem Okoye. He worked very hard and on 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> May 1971, the school was inspected and approved for West African School Certificate Examination.

On 4<sup>th</sup> March 1972, Mrs Mediatrix Eneasato replaced Mr B. N. Okoye as the Principal of the school. She did her best to uplift the image of the school. With the aid of Mr John Ukoh- one of the Landlords, she stopped encroachment on the school land. She walled some parts of the school. The number of students increased steadily. With the co-operation of the staff, discipline was improved. The P.T.A helped her financially to construct one dormitory block. She also built a six-classroom block. The school team of Basket ball won Gold medals during this period. Mrs Eneasato finally was transferred to Ogidi Girls' Secondary School while Sr. Miriam Therese Ozomma from Ogidi Girls' came to Agulu. On 8<sup>th</sup> September 1979, Sr. Miriam Therese Ozomma- the new Principal arrived with her loads , ready for the new term. She noticed that the main problems were how to improve the academic standard,

accommodation, water, security, light furniture etc. On 13<sup>th</sup> October 1979, she met the Executives of Agulu People's Union at Onitsha and in a letter read to them, she portrayed the lack of accommodation in the school. It was unanimously agreed that the A.P.U will build a one storey building to ease the congestion. The building is now nearing completion. She increased the study period to improve the academic standard. A water tanker was arranged to bring water to the school so that students go out only once a week to fetch water. The school Rules and regulations was printed and distributed to every student in aid of discipline. The P.T.A provided the finance that helped to accomplish the complete fencing of the school. The P.T.A also built ten water system toilet with twenty modern bathrooms. Through their instrumentality also, pipes were laid throughout the school for pipe borne-water. Arrangement is also being made for bore-hole by Soma project so that within a short time lack of water at Girls' High School will be fought to a finish. The P.T.A has also provided money to help pay for furniture for the new science Lab. The P.T.A contributions towards the progress of the school cannot be overestimated.

The State Education Commission provided the initial money to help rewire the school for electricity so that on 28<sup>th</sup> October 1981, the school began to enjoy N.E.P.A. In 1982 the refectory which was used as Dormitory was evacuated, twenty formica tables and two hundred and forty plastic chairs were constructed and put into use so that students will learn how to eat like ladies. The popularity of the school continues to grow every day. Many parents love Girls' High School Agulu and the evidence is the number of children in the school- nearly 1,000 students. There are two festival occasions in the school yearly\_ the Founder's Day celebration every February when the Bishop comes as the Founder and prays and blesses the staff and students. Agulu people also turn out in mass in full support of the school. On Prize Giving day at the end of the academic year, prizes and cups are given to the best students that won both academic and moral excellence.

In the field of sports, Girls' High School Agulu is leading in the State. Girls' High School has maintained Gold Medals in Basket Ball, Hockey and Volley ball for many years. In academics, the progress is steady. In matters of discipline, I simply state what the Zonal Commissioner, Rev S.N.C. Okonkwo said on Founders/Sports Day of 14<sup>th</sup> February 1983\_ "Girls' High School Agulu is a very disciplined school. It is one of the best schools in Awka Zone. The compound is always very neat. The staff cooperate with the Principal and things move as they ought to be. We are very happy about this. The Principal deserves commendation and we wish them more grease to their elbows"

Moral instruction is taught by the Parish Priest and Pastor regularly every Thursday. The Chairman of former Board of Governors and P.T.A. Mr C.U.O.O. Adi, Mr Obiekezie and Mr Solomon Obi and members of their Committees help a lot to set matters going.

We thank His Excellency Chief IfeanyichukwuNwobodo for the new school van he gave us. We thank Bishop A.K Obiefuna, Igwe Chief E. U Ejidike, the State Education Commission Enugu and Awka, the Ministry of Education Enugu and Awka, the A. P. U; the P. T. A; the Priests and Pastors, our dedicated members of staff who are doing everything possible for the progress of the school; Udokamma Club, generous individuals who have helped the school in cash and kind. May the Lord bless and reward them.

We ask all people of goodwill who have the interest of Girls' High School Agulu at heart not to relent in their efforts to help us train our children spiritually, morally, academically, physically, and socially for God and Nigeria so that we can make Girls' High School Agulu the most viable School in Anambra State.

AD moulthusannos.

SR MIRIAM THERESE OZOMMA PRINCIPAL

## **GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL AGULU**

### **BACKGROUND**

Remote Information: Catholic Missions and schools go hand in hand. School, so to say, was seen and regarded as the handmaid of Missionary enterprise. School was a veritable tool in the hands of the Missionaries. It enabled them to communicate the new faith. The establishment of Girls' High School Agulu is closely tied to the second Missionary journey of Rev Fr Albert Bubendorff to Agulu. For when Fr. Albert Bubendorff appeared a second time in Agulu in 1914 after the first attempt failed, he opened an evening school that enabled the converts to appreciate and embrace the new faith. This foremost school was established on the land donated to the church by Chiefs AgupugoEjelue and AnyokeOgbudaa at Oneke/OgbuduliAgulu. It was from that place that the mission and the school were transferred to NwaguAgulu which was a more central place to the whole town (the very land that houses Girls' High School, Practicing School, and St Anthony Catholic Comprehensive Institute, Agulu)

In 1924, as a result of the little problem that would have engulfed both the mission and school at Nwagu, some members of the church especially members from Agulu-enu refused to attend services at Nwagu and threatened to start attending Sunday masses at Obeledu. This impasse lasted till 1934 when EzeAnyanwu Primary School and mission were formally opened. This mission and school were possible through the generous donation of land by Chief MuojamaEzeobikili of Nneora village. The above mission school was named " Agulu B Station". This mission and school later turned into the present St. Patrick Catholic Mission Agulu.

Furthermore, in 1927, the mission and School at Nwagu received yet another great shock that nearly swallowed it. As a result of that, members from the down villages of Agulu, namely: Umuowe, Umunnwu, Umuifite, Ifiteana and Nnogidi separated themselves from the Mission and School at Nwagu. They had their church rebuilt at Ikpo which has metamorphosed into St. Mathias School and Mission. In 1934, the Church and Mission at Ikpo was transferred to the site of the present St John Catholic Mission Agulu. The sole reason of such a transfer was to have the mission school at a more central position.

The Mission and School at EzeAnyanwu had her own internal crisis. That crisis led to the establishment of another mission and school at Isiamigbo that gave birth to the present St Theresa Catholic Mission Agulu. The establishment of the mission and school was possible through the generous donation of land by Mr.OfoMgbachi.

With the transfer of Rev Fr. Liddane to Adazi in 1930, it was decreed that no Sunday service should be held in all the stations nearer to Adazi where Sunday mass was celebrated every Sunday. The implication was that no Service were held in all the stations in Agulu on Sundays. This lasted from 1930-1956. In 1956, through the untiring effort of Agulu people, it was possible to have Sunday Masses in Agulu during the regime of Rev. Father Michael Clifford.

The only schools that were on then were evening classes being taught by some "pupil" teachers who were attending schools elsewhere e.gAdazi School in the mornings. With the legislation that came with Rev Fr. Liddane, that there should be no Sunday Service around Adazi, thus smaller schools like those in Agulu were swallowed by bigger schools. Thus, Agulu had no stable school at all as at 1930s. A gleam but firm light started rising in 1936 with the great initiative of some group of Agulu Catholic Pioneer Teachers namely: Messrs Martin Umenwa, John Ezeani, Julius Okoye, Stephen Anukwu, Romanus Ebebe, David Ogbuze, as well as Josephat Uboe. They emerged under one umbrella called A. C. T. U. P

(AGULU CATHOLIC TEACHERS UNION OF PEACE). The single aim of A.C.T.U.P. was to enhance and promote peace among all the stations of Agulu for them to emulate other towns in the field of progress, mostly to establish schools in the town. Their effort yielded fruit in 1938 when they were allowed to open a central catechumen class at Nwagu. The central catechumen class was successfully built with cordial understanding among all the stations and villages in Agulu. This single act brought Agulu together once more, with a central committee and central finance. One will not be making any mistake if one says that education was what re-united Agulu people. The union, A.C.T.U.P. worked even harder in their effort to unite Agulu all the more. Hence, in the same 1938, through the influence and sponsorship of the union, a big football field was carved out on the same land at Nwagu that accommodated the Central Catechumen class attached to St. Mary's Agulu. Precisely, on 27<sup>th</sup> December, 1938, the union opened the field with a football match and sports. The citizens of Agulu were invited and Rev. Fr. Liddane was also invited to witness the events. The attendance of Agulu sons and daughters was so enormous that the newly constructed large field was rendered smallish by the mammoth crowd. People were lavishly entertained. Rev. Fr. C.Lidanne was highly delighted so much that he ordered that a table be brought from his house at Adazi. He stood on the tamle and spoke to Agulu, thanking the pagans for sending their children in a large number to school. He then promised that he would build a part of the Adazi school at Nwagu the following year that is 1939. The joy of A. C.T.U.P. knew no bounds when in January 1939 a full-fledged infant school was built at St Mary's Agulu i.e on the same land at Nwagu. With the presence of morning school at Agulu, every station in Agulu got its own Catechumen class and these gradually converted into schools. That is how Agulu got its many schools in a small but quiet way. At this point in history, Girls' High School Agulu was still in the mind of God. Another feather was added on the cap of Agulu in 1947 with the opening of yet another school-St John Bosco's Preliminary Training Centre at the same Nwagu for one year course for teachers and was changed to St. Anthony's College in 1949 as Elementary Training College (ETC) with Fr. Chamberline as her first Principal. With that change, it started running four years program. The St Mary's Infant School became the Practising School for the college and has remained till today. St. Anthony's Elementary Training College grew from strength to strength through the able leadership of her various Principals (Fr. Chamberline 1948-1950; Fr. Haplin 1951-1956; Fr. Edward Hurley 1957-1962 who died at the time he was about completing the Hall named after him on GHS Agulu; Fr. Cockran 1963-1965) Fr. Cockran was heading the school until 1965 when the government of Eastern Nigerian Region closed dow schools of such kind.

Immediate Information

### **The birth of Girls' High School Agulu**

As a result of the phasing out of St. Anthony's Elementary Teacher Training College in 1965, only the Practising school remained in the land of St. Mary's Agulu. Nature, they say, abhors vacuum. Hence, in January 1966, instead of allowing the land to waste away, the Catholic Church in her wisdom planted the mustered seed of a school- Girls' High School Agulu with the sobriquet: LUX ET VERITAS. The above account is enough to reveal to one that from the beginning of things, the land at Nwagu was prepared by God for GHS Agulu. It has remained in that land till today. Rev Sr. Mary Emmanuel (S.J.O.G) was her first Principal (1966-1970). She worked for two years (1966-1969) when the Nigerian civil war started and disturbed the normal academic program. At the end of civil war in 1970, and subsequent government take-over of schools, Girls' High School, Agulu now under government of Anambra state reopened for her normal academic program with the appointment of indigenous principals starting with Mr. Bernard Okoye 1970-1972; Mrs Mediatix Eneasato 1972-1979; Rev Sr. M.T. Ozomma 1979-1984; Rev. Sr. T.M.B Anyika 1984-1992; Mrs Maria Azi 1992-1994; Mrs A.N

Anyakwo 1994- 1998; Mrs O.C Adimorah 1998-2004; Comrade F.U Onyeka 2004-2004; Rev. Sr. Dr. M.R Terese Okeke 2004-2007. Mrs. C.U Nriagu took over from 2007 to 2012. Rev Fr. Dr Anthony Ezeogamba continued from 2012 to 2013 as both Manager and Principal before handing over to Rev Sr. Felice Anyikwa in 2013 and she remains the incumbent principal of GHS Agulu till today.

As a result of the government take over of schools in 1970, another school was conceived by Agulu Catholic Community since they had been denied ownership and management of their school(GHS Agulu). This vocational institute hence they agreed to build St Anthony's Social Centre/Comprehensive Institute at the site of old central church of Agulu Catholics(St Mary's). the new school took off officially in 1992/93 academic session.

Igbo people say, "oji ihe nwata welie aka ya elu, aka lobe ya owedaa aka ya, nwata ewelukwa ihe ya" so, at the appointed time, when it pleased God, precisely on 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2009, Girls' High School together with other schools of its kind was given back to her original owner (Agulu Catholic Community under the leadership of Most Rev. Dr. P.C. Ezeokafor) by the government of Anambra State under the leadership of his Excellency, Mr. Peter Obi. In September, 2010/2011 Academic session, Rev. Fr. Dr. Anthony Ezeogamba was appointed as the first Manager of Girls' High School Agulu. Today, GHS Agulu has 38 government paid tutorial staff, four non tutorial government paid staff, 20 PTA paid tutorial staff, and 19 non tutorial PTA paid staff (including cooks, Gatekeepers, Matron, Auxiliaries and domestic staff). The school has a population of nine hundred and eleven (911) students out of which 472 are boarding students.

Girls' High School Agulu has produced so many great women in so many fields of human endeavour. It has produced numerous Rev. Sisters, reputable wives, Professors like Prof. Mrs Joy eyisi, Prof. Mrs Grace Ofoma; senior Lecturers, Medical Doctors, Surgeons, Pharmacists, Traders, Lawyers etc. one cannot but because the school has no functional Old Girls' Association, say that the daughters (former students) of GHS Agulu are ingrates. We cannot say that GHS Agulu has grown to her full potentials because it has today an established Academic Award being given at the beginning of every Academic year by two former students of the school namely: Profs. Mrs. Grace Ofoma and Joy Eyisi in collaboration with other notable friends of the school like Prof Emenike Obi and Prof Obiora Ogbuagu. But it is a fact that GHS Agulu can never grow into her full potentials without functional Old Girls' Association. Girls' High School Agulu at Forty-seven (47) calls her daughters to come home and look after her, for she is aging gradually.

#### Sources

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Note: the Return of the Secondary Schools was passed into law by the Anambra State House of Assembly with effect from 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2009 and gazetted in the Official gazette of Anambra State of Nigeria No. 5 Awka-12<sup>th</sup> October 2009 vol. 19 as Supplement: Law No. 9-Public Education (Transfer of Schools) (Special Provisions) law, 2009 A119.

## BRIEF HISTORY OF GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL, AGULU

\*Second Missionary journey of Rev. Fr. Albert Bubendorff in 1914.- evening school on the land donated by chiefs Agupugo Ejelue and Anyoke Ogbudaa

\*later transfer to Nwagu Agulu which was more centre place of the town. In 1924-crisis from Agulu-enu and trait to attend Sunday masses at Obeledu lasted till 1934 when Ezeanyanwu Primary school & mission was opened thanks to donation of land by Chief Muojama Obikili of Nneoha village= Agulu B station\_ St Patrick's Catholic mission Agulu.

\*in 1927, some villages separated, hence, creation of St Mathias school and mission which in 1934- St John's Catholic mission, Agulu.

\*later the school and mission at Ezeanyanwu begot St Theresa's Catholic mission, Agulu due to crisis thanks to the donation of land through Mr Ofor Mgbachi.

\*next on the stage- Rev. Fr. Liddane with his transfer to Adazi in 1930, no more Sunday masses in nearby stations till 1956.

\*Next came Rev. Fr Micheal Clifford and with him Sunday masses in Agulu commenced again.

\*A.C.T.U.P. helped to open a central catechumen classes in Nwagu in 1938. (Agulu catholic Teachers union of peace)

\*in 1947, an opening of school, St John Bosco's preliminary training centre at Nwagu for one year course for teachers later became St Anthony's College Nwagu as (ETC) Elementary Training College- Fr. Chamberline the first Principal hence, 4 years programme held. Practising school for that college= St Mary's infant school.

Other Principal followed after Fr. Chamberline(1948-1950)

Fr. Halpin(1951-1956)

Fr. Edward Hurley(1957-1962) died 1962

Fr Cockran(1963-1965): at his time , the government of Eastern region closed down schools of such kind.

The creation (birth) of GHS Agulu

\*Born in Jan. 1966-consequent upon the phasing of St Anthony's Elementary Teachers' Training College in 1965. Leaving only the Practising School in the land of St Mary,s Agulu.

\*created by the Catholic Church

The Principals so far;

Rev. Sr. Mary-Emmanuel (S.J.O.G)- 1st Principal (1966-1970). Nigerian Civil war started after which govt later took over schools.

Indigenous Principals:

Mr. Bernard Okoye 1970-1972;

Mrs Mediatrix Eneasato 1972-1979;

Rev Sr. M.T. Ozomma 1979-1984;

Rev. Sr. T.M.B Anyika 1984-1992;

Mrs Maria Azi 1992-1994;

Mrs A.N Anyakwo 1994- 1998;

Mrs O.C Adimorah 1998-2004;

Comrade F.U Onyeka 2004-2004;

Rev. Sr. Dr. M.R Terese Okeke 2004-2007.

Mrs. C.U Nriagu 2007 to 2012.

Rev Fr. Dr Anthony Ezeogamba 2012 to 2013

Rev Sr. Felice Anyikwa (2013.)

Lady Nonye Ezeuzo(2013---) the school was named by Irish Sisters of St John of God in 1965.

Girls High School Agulu formerly named Catholic Girls' School Agulu founded in 1966 by the late Arch Bishop Charlse Heerey (CSSP). Arch Bishop of Onitsha. The site is the former Practising teachers College converted to lower Elememtary training College (St John Bosco training college in 1946, then to higher Elememtary college (St Anthony's Teachers college. Agulu)