

Peace: The Peace Talk Series

Volume 1

Mary Gloria C. Njoku

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Defining Peace

Traditional definitions identify peace as the absence of war or other violence. Over the past half-century observers have come to see peace as a much broader concept. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (2304) fits this later model, holding that peace is not merely the absence of war, and it is not limited to maintaining a balance of powers between adversaries. Peace cannot be attained on earth without safeguarding the goods of persons, free communication among men, respect for the dignity of persons and peoples, and the assiduous practice of fraternity. Peace is "the tranquility of order." Peace is the work of justice and the effect of charity.

Earthly peace is the image and fruit of the peace of Christ, the messianic "Prince of Peace" (Is. 9:5). By the blood of his cross, "in his own person he killed the hostility," (Eph 2:16). He reconciled humans with God and made his Church the sacrament of the unity of the human race and of its union with God. "He is our peace." He has declared: "Blessed are the peacemakers" (Mt. 5:9).

People, who renounce violence and bloodshed in order to safeguard human rights, make use of those means of defense available to the weakest and bear witness to evangelical charity; provided they do so without harming the rights and obligations of other people and societies. They bear legitimate witness to the gravity of the physical and moral risks of recourse to violence, with all its destruction and death (CCH).

Injustice, excessive economic or social inequalities, envy, distrust, and pride raging among men, women and nations constantly threaten peace and cause wars. Everything done to overcome these disorders contributes to building up peace and avoiding war (CCH)

The question you should be asking yourself this night is: am I willing to overcome envy, distrust and pride? Am I willing to stop all forms of injustice, economic and social inequalities? Am I willing to give peace a chance? How do I instill peace in my life? What level of peace am I looking for (personal peace in the midst of chaotic circumstance, family peace or national peace)?

I do believe with the Church that if we can vanquish the disorders of envy, distrust, greed and their like, if we support social and economic justice and come together in charity, the words of the Prophet Isaiah (2:4) "then, they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nations shall not lift up sword against nations, neither shall they learn war anymore" will be fulfilled. Then, we shall indeed know peace. For now, we should be saying, let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

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Making Decisions with Christ and Discovering God's Will as we Work for Peace

God has given us a mind and intends that we should use it. When we have to make decisions, we must ask ourselves which ones are reasonable and which are unreasonable. At times, however, there are good reasons for one course of action, but good reasons for another as well.

At issue in such situations may well be matters of vital importance. Is there is perhaps someone we can trust? Then he or she can give us good advice in this situation. On the other hand, we cannot always be taking refuge in someone else; and even when we do, we ourselves must ultimately make the decision; w- We must do so. H-, however, as people united to Christ. When Jesus was on earth, the disciples could put questions to him. What of us? We too can ask him questions, because he is present.

Let us put ourselves in his presence. Let us interiorly ask him our questions, in a spirit of readiness to act according to his will or wish. It is precisely this readiness that is lacking in many people. They convince themselves that what they want is also the Lord's will or at least that he has no objection to their plans.

If a person is to be able to discover God's will, he or she must be interiorly ready to accept and do it. Let us ask Jesus in prayer that we may make the right decision. He has the power to communicate his will to us in one or another way. Generally speaking, we must know how to wait; but we should also be confident that at the right moment we will know what we should do. If our decision should nonetheless prove to have been objectively mistaken, Christ will not hold that against us. He will make good any harm we may cause.

We should, then, consciously join with Jesus in making any daily decisions that are not utterly unimportant. He is not at our disposal on Sunday only, but is close to us at all times. He wants to become our daily partner as we live our life. We should be conscious of union with him as we make our decisions.

Since Jesus is "the way and the truth" (cf. Jn 14.6), we must model our behaviour on his, not the other way around, with him yielding to our wishes. Those, then, who wish to live aright and reach the goal of life, which is the father in heaven, must ask what Jesus' will is. We acquire an instinctive grasp of it when, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we accustom ourselves to reflecting on our earthly problems in the spirit of Jesus' words.

It is helpful to ask ourselves: what decision would Jesus make if he were in my place? It is a question I must ask without bias. I can be sure that through the Holy Spirit he will influence me in my considerations; so that I will come to see the decision which is in keeping with his spirit.

Jesus also speaks through his Church and its teachers. What he says to his apostles applies to these teachers: "He who hears you, hears me. He who rejects you, rejects me" (Lk 10:16).

Those who are ready to listen to their own interior voice but not at the same time to the voice of those who speak to them in the name and by the commission of Christ are in danger of confusing the voice of Christ with the voice of "flesh and blood." It pleases God frequently to make his will known through human beings. If we have humility to accept and do it when it comes in this manner, Jesus himself becomes visible in us, for he "obediently accepted even death (Phil 2:8).

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The point of this story on making decisions with Christ is to help all of us who want peace to work towards it in all sincerity and openness with Christ. Even in the most difficult cases, the Lord Jesus can capacitate us to manage the situations well. Whether the situation be the case of people that you have assisted in the past turning against you and doing everything in their power to make you miserable, or people you trusted betraying your confidence in them or your family becoming so argumentative that you do not know where to begin to end the consequent conflict or in the Church, some individuals have decided to make the Church ~~uncontrollable~~uncontrollable or other very difficult cases. Just know that Christ can inspire you to do something to restore peace if you are committed to a peaceful resolution. Never give up hope. Recall 2 weeks ago, I talked about a Church conflict between the parish priest and the parishioners that lasted for more than six weeks. It took one man taking the decision to do something to reconcile the conflict. In that story it was Mr. John Njoku that allowed God to use him to bring peace and harmony to the parish. Consider becoming the agent of peace in your own home, school, town, village, clan, church, local government, state, region or nation. I believe that you can do it my dear listener. This night, I invite you to pray with Christ if you are experiencing any form of conflict, find a solution with Christ and begin implementation of the solution with Christ. I am certain that the Lord of peace will make you his instrument of peace. Here is the Prayer of Saint Francis that you can pray often for the grace to become a channel of God's peace:

Prayer of Saint Francis

1. Make me a channel of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me bring your love.

Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord

And where there's doubt, true faith in you.

2. Make me a channel of your peace.

Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope.

Where there is darkness, only light.

And where there's sadness, ever joy.

O Master, grant that I may never seek.

so much to be consoled, as to console,

to be understood, as to understand,

to be loved, as to love with all my soul.

3. Make me a channel of your peace.

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

in giving of ourselves that we receive,

and in dying that we 're born to eternal life.

Francis of Assisi, 1182-1226

When the going gets tough, remember to pray, make decisions and work with Christ. And I continue to pray: let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

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On behalf of my producer Fidelis Onoh, the studio manager _____,

I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing a peaceful night rest!

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The Importance of the Elders in Creating and Sustaining Peace

The beliefs, including the false beliefs, conveyed from one generation to another can without doubt become a source of individual or collective violence or ~~guarantee peace~~guarantee peace in the nation and in the world. One way to overcome discord, hatred and violence is through the commitment of elders to become conscientious role models and to represent key values of forgiveness, reconciliation and peace. The elders have the choice to conscientiously address their responsibility towards youths to leave the fruit of their work and achievement behind them: a world of peace or destruction for the next generations, to leave an image of the way to live and die that will influence their peers and descendants positively, to transmit through their attitudes and behaviours a mental imprint of living in peace with the self, the family and the nations.

The second United Nations World Assembly on Ageing, which took place in Madrid in April 2002, offered an opportunity to address the issue of the elderly population and ~~w~~World peace with a proposed plan of action at the macro-level to involve the elders in all efforts to prevent conflict and violence, promote peace at the inner and outer level, and empower future generations for peace and teach them the skills to maintain a state of peace.

The question we should ask ourselves though (I mean those of us who are older) is whether we want to commit to the creation and sustenance of peace. It has been reported that in many villages and clans, some elderly men and women engage in violent actions ranging from poisoning people to death to instigating allegations that sometimes cause peoples' lives and properties.

There is an example of violent behaviour by elders in the book of Daniel 13. Two men who could not have their way with a virtuous woman decided to accuse her so that she would be put to death. In that story, the ending was good because God roused the young man, Daniel, to inspire other elders to pay attention to the judgment they made without fair-hearing to the accused and proper investigation of the persecutors. Susanna was saved that day by the grace of God. I liked the fact that there are many elders in our families, vilages, state and nation.

Why am I telling this story? I know that in every extended family, clan, village, state and nation, there are many elders, both those who do violence and those who are peaceful. The challenge of our time is that some elders watch others doing wrong and fail to challenge them to stop. Today, I tell you, the elder, to rise up to live out the legacy of ageing. Psychology of old age as posited by Erik Erikson tells us that the last stage of development is Old Age (Integrity vs. despair): Older people enter a period of reflection, becoming assured that their lives have been meaningful and ready to face death with acceptance and dignity. Or they are in despair for their unaccomplished goals, failures and ill-spent lives.

We often tend to associate old age with intergrity, white hair with truthfulness and uprightness. We are taught to respect our elderly persons and we do so within the limits of understanding in our varied ethnic, national and cultural groups. I do not know of any place in this world where people who are elderly are not respected. What this means is that if the world respects people who are elderly because they have acquired a lot of knowledge, have integrity and are capable of helping the world, we expect them to assist us to overcome the challenges of violence.

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It is my expectation that those who experienced the Biafran war for example have known the ravages of war and would be in a better position to tell us to use another strategy in managing the crisis we may encounter living in our country Nigeria. I expect that fathers who have been groomed in homes where there were all forms of violence will now want to set a different standard in their own families. I expect our elders to become involved in creating and sustaining peace, teaching young people to learn and live peace.

I am proposing that elder become involved in all levels of the society (homes, schools, churches etc) to help teach and live peace. If you are the grandpa, grandma, great-grandpa or great-grand ma, take on the task of modeling peace to your children, grandchildren and great-grand children. According to Bandura, a proponent of social learning theory in psychology, young people learn from observing others engaging in particular behaviour. So my revered elders, I have dedicated my peace talk to you today praying that you assist us to learn and live peace. We need you in this dialogue about ameliorating violence and creating and sustaining peace. Please join the peace wagon and let us spread the good news - Blessed are the peace makers for they shall be called children of God (Mtt. 5:9). And as always I say, let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

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Family Communications

A major difference between communication with our families and that of the world at large is that the stakes are higher with our families. We can escape from conflicts with a neighbour down the street, our union representative, the vendor and even our boss in the work place but we can't easily get away from our families. We still have to go home at the end of each work day. A family with good communication is a setting for growth, physical, emotional, social and spiritual health. But a family with chronic poor communication is a pressure cooker where each member is vulnerable to emotional devastation. Everyone becomes susceptible to varied physical and psychological symptoms.

The family becomes a problematic setting when members are prohibited from expressing certain feelings, needs, or awareness. Rules of what cannot be asked for, talked about, or noticed are learned from the older members and the parents. These rules become unconscious inhibitors that prevent us from sharing important part of our experiences. Examples of unhealthy rules are as follows: It is wrong to

- Talk about your hopes and dreams
- Express anger at your elder or parents
- Seek acknowledgement or recognition for work
- Ask for help or emotional support
- Show that you have been hurt or show your emotional pain
- Talk about your sexual needs or feelings
- Notice or comment on mistakes and problems
- Voice disagreement or bring conflict into the open
- Directly express your anger
- Express fear, ambivalence, reservations and uncertainty
- Show affection
- Ask for attention

There are some of these rules specifically directed to perception. These include don't notice that some of us are not living up to what we say, don't notice that we have a lot of infighting, don't notice that papa is drunk and dysfunctional, don't notice hostility at the dinner table, don't talk about granny's death, don't notice mama's affairs with other men don't notice papa's affair with other women.

Interpersonal Context

—When your child or wife is angry, have you stopped to ask or notice whether the anger is about what is happening at home or what is going on at school or at work.

Complementarity

—Reciprocity is the defining feature of any relationship. In every relationship, one person's behaviour is yoked to the other's behaviour. If one person changes, the relationship changes and the other person will automatically be influenced. E.g., a husband, John, who complains that his wife, Mary, nags him, is inadvertently saying that his wife hasn't received a fair hearing for her concerns in a long time. Instead of waiting for his wife to complain, John can start asking her how she feels. Mary will then feel that John cares about her enough to be concerned about her

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feelings. Complementarity does not mean that people in relationship control each other, it means that they influence each other.

▲ **Circular Causality**

——Who started the problem is not an important question. Circular causality suggests that problems are sustained by on-going series of actions and reactions.

▲ **Triangles**

——When parents complain that their 11-years old son is unmanageable, it may turn out to be that the parents use ineffective disciplinary measures.

▲ **Family Structure**

——Family patterns of interactions are embedded in unseen structures. Families have subsystems determined by generation, gender and functions that are demarcated by interpersonal boundaries. Interpersonal boundaries are invisible barriers that regulate the amount of contact with others. If parents always step in to settle disputes between their children, the children won't learn to fight their own battles. A rule forbidding phone calls during family meals shields the family from intrusion. Rigid boundaries are overly restrictive and permit minimal contact resulting in disengagement. Disengaged subsystems are independent but isolated. On the positive end, it fosters autonomy. On the negative side, disengagement limits warmth and affection. Enmeshed subsystems offer a heightened sense of support but at the expense of independence and competence. Enmeshed parents offer their children closeness, but too much closeness cripples initiative.

We need to watch out for these variables and how they support or destroy our family stability.

▲ **Discipline Issues**

——Most of us believe in corporal punishment because we often think that they are the elements that helped to shape our lives. I beg to differ on this point. I strongly believe that it was the care that my parents, grandparents and uncles and aunts showed to me and the love of God that helped me to become the person I am today. My multiple experiences of life led me to understand that the world is inherently good and there is no need for me to live in fear. For those who grew up believing in a world that is hostile, they are more likely to display aggressive behaviour even when unnecessary. Based on my experiences as a clinical and community psychologist, I know that corrective measures go beyond corporal punishment and the most effective types are the ones that allow the person being corrected to learn the desirable behaviour. These measures include behavioural methods of reinforcements that I mentioned earlier in this retreat.

▲ **Childlessness in Families**

——All the cultural groups in our country value children so much that many believe that marriage is intended mainly for procreation. However, if we search out the bible passages that describe the unity of the husband and wife, we learn that the couple leave their parents and become one. And in 1 Cor 7:2-4 that the husband is the master of the wife's body and the wife is the master of the husband's body. The same chapter 7 from verse 10 to 11 talks about the need for the husband and wife to remain consistent in their marriage and not seek divorce for any purpose whatsoever. So I am always puzzled when extended families or the husband begin to

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agitate and ask the wife to leave her home because of childlessness. First, I wonder ~~whether~~ ~~the~~ parties have forgotten that children are gifts from God that cannot be purchased. Secondly, I reflect on the departure from the oneness the couple attained by virtue of their marriage and ask whether childlessness is the all important ingredient for consistency in marriage? Thirdly, when the wife is abused and asked to leave or the husband is encouraged to marry another wife, I ask, are the protagonists certain that the problem is from the woman? Have they ascertained the fertility of the husband?

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— Apart from all these questions, I remember the stories of Hannah, the mother of Samuel, Manoah's wife, the mother of Samson and Elizabeth the mother of John. I also remember the experiences I have had over the years getting to know couples who had children several years after their marriage and even that of westerners who chose not to have children at all. I am pushed to ask, is our world different from theirs? Why do we have a big gap in our mentality about the essence of children in family living? So, I ask you that are fighting over children in marriage whether you have paused to reflect over these kinds of questions that I am asking?

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— On another level, when a couple have problem with conceiving and bearing children, they might need to explore medical explanation for their childlessness. Throughout the process of the ascertainment and after, they need to be patient and prayerful. Sometimes emotional distress that can accompany the situation might worsen the possibility of having children. It can also create additional tension in the family that might lead to premature crisis. I believe that patience, medical attention and prayers are the best way to manage childlessness. With the advent of adoption, I believe that families can have children. The summary of my message here is that it feels awkward to me that families disintegrate because of the lack of children. I am hoping for a better understanding that will highlight more the importance of mutual love and happiness of the husband and wife.

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Mass Media, Websites, Computer and Phones

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Technological advances have turned our world into a global village. Internet and phones have improved communication and the sharing of knowledge. The challenge, however, is that the information shared via internet are not always edited to ensure its soundness. Therefore, when children use the internet, they may learn new behaviours that are inconsistent with the values of their families. Further, many people spend more time using the internet and other mass media sources such as television and radio than they do with family members. For these reasons, these advances that were intended to aid human development is both a source of blessing and distress to humanity. My suggestion is that we use these tools reasonably rather than abusing them and creating chaos in our families.

I pray that you my listener will reflect on some of the issues I raised this night and if possible discuss them in your families, in your churches and other relevant places and agree on how to overcome the challenges therein and create peace in your homes, churches, social circles etc. Because we continue to say let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

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Families in Crisis: Which Way Forward

Rev. Sr. Dr. Mary Gloria Njoku, DDL

—It was in 2004, my first year of working as a ~~counsellor~~counselor, d. During the second week of school, I enthusiastically visited the classroom of my clients, introducing myself to the children and engaging them in discussion about the role of a counsellor. As I concluded my commentary with "and as your counsellor, I am here to help you with your problems," a hand shot up in the front row. Before I could call on him, James blurted out, "my mom has been married two times and my dad has been married once and now my mom is getting divorced again and I don't know where I'm going to live. Is this the kind of problem you help with?" I took a deep breath. In reflecting on this experience, I realized how few resources there were for children in our schools. Without a doubt, growing up is more difficult now than it used to be. In addition to the normal developmental problems, many children must cope with sexual abuse, divorce, poverty, alcoholism, abandonment, and violence.

—At another time, I visited my friend, Monik, and her family. Throughout the week I was there, I was tormented by the behaviour I observed in her family, particularly, those evidenced by her twins. The boys could barely follow directives from their parents; t. The often insisted on doing anything they want at any given time and these things consist mainly of watching television, playing computer and phone games. The parents rarely called them to order and when they tried, it consisted of merciless beating without explanation of why the punishment was being given or the desired behaviour they want to see in their children. As if these were not enough, two days to my departure, the parents stopped talking to each other. I eventually found out that the father, Jerry, who often panics when anything happens in the family displayed this behaviour when he could not find his sister in the house and his wife became angry and decided to stop talking to him. Jerry begged Monik to forgive him but she refused. Therefore, Jerry decided to uphold the "no talking" rule.

—My colleague, Ndidi, of her own accord chose to share her marital life with me. She told me stories of how her husband cheats on her with other women. When asked how she found out that her husband was being unfaithful to her, Ndidi explained that she tracked him often to

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homes of people, office and hotels. She told the stories of how she caught him each time and at the end, stated that her catching her husband in the act of infidelity to their marriage has not improved her life but rather they have become more estranged. To make the matter worse, Ndidi has refused to express any type of affection to her husband. She welcomes him back home each day with "where have you been?"; ~~"why"~~ Why are you doing this to me?"

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——As with my experience in the school setting, when I reflected on all that transpired during my visit to friends and Ndidi's plight, I realized that family living has become more complicated and challenging than ever. While gender roles in terms of care of finances, discipline, housecare etc. have shifted, the mental set of relationships (i.e. who is in control) appeared to have remained constant. Infidelity from both men and women, quarrels, issues of having children and divorce seemed to be on the increase. Additionally, the ~~proliferation of media, websites, facebook and abuse of phones have~~ proliferations of media, websites, facebook and abuse of phones have contributed to the worsening of family difficulties encountered by parents and children. And we are forced to ask:—"how far can this crisis go?"; ~~W~~why is life so complicated? ~~W~~would it be better if each individual on our planet lives alone?"

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——Living alone will not be an option because humans do not do well in solitude. Instead, they seek out relationships with others, marked by both breadth and dept. Intimate relationships have changed in significant ways when compared to the prototype of the married couple at the core of the nuclear family. Among these are an increase in the age at which people get married, rising numbers of women pursuing careers, and children who raise themselves. Despite these challenges, people continue to seek out marriage and family. The need for affiliation compels us to form relationship of breath for support and uncertainty reduction. The need for intimacy compels us to look for a one-on-one relationship of depth with another. The need to belong explains both tendencies. Therefore, we continue to seek out family living.

The following factors contribute to family crisis.

Fidelity and Jealousy

——When asked to comment on the statement, "If you love me, you'd be jealous," most people disagree vehemently with it and challenges its soundness. Some argue that jealousy is a selfish reaction to perceived threat and loss, indicative of poor self-esteem, possessiveness, and a lack of trust rather than a sign of true love. But can we truly love someone and not feel jealous at all? Although feeling jealous is not inherently bad, the behavioural manifestation can be good or bad. For example when a husband feels jealous because men admire his wife and he decides to improve his looks by getting a nice shave and also starts becoming more affectionate towards his wife, the result is pleasant. But when the jealous feelings turns to envy where the husband also wants to be admired by women and therefore goes out of his way to display flirtatious behaviour to attract this admiration and consequently end up in developing secret affairs or sexual relationships with other women, the husband has set the stage for crisis in his family.

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Use of Alcohol

——The use of alcohol is often implicated as a contributor to relationship violence, partly because there is overwhelming evidence that alcohol can increase all forms of human aggression.

Alcohol has a depressing and disinhibiting effect on human brain. The depressing effect dulls the brain and sometimes can lead to a person becoming unconscious. The disinhibiting impact makes people to become belligerent (i.e., argumentative, quarrelsome, violent etc.).

Divorce

—Divorce is associated with severe distress and loneliness. It takes a toll on health and mortality of the partners as they struggle with termination of a long-term relationship, the involvement of children and societal disapproval. In addition to the problems faced by the protagonists of divorce, the children often are traumatized by the experience. While the separating partners may look forward to new beginnings, the children see a future that is bleak with nothing to look forward to as all they see is the dissolution of their family. Children of divorced families evidence emotional and behavioural adjustment in the school and at home. Physical, psychological, social and educational challenges are often noted in these children.

Absence of Authentic Christian Living

—Christian love, a theological virtue, is a divinely infused habit, which inclines the human will to cherish God for His own sake above all things, and love people (sic) for the sake of God.

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Bishop Godfrey MaryPaul Okoye (1975) further explains this definition thus:

1. Christian love is distinct from, and superior to the inborn inclination or the acquired habit of loving God in the natural order. The origin of supernatural love is God, hence St. Paul declares that the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 5:5). The definition indicates also that love resides primarily in the human will.
2. It is clear also that the specific act of love is benevolence and friendship. For to love God is to wish Him all honour and glory and every good and to endeavour, as far as we can, to obtain it for Him. The Holy Scripture emphasizes the reciprocal feature of love which makes it real friendship: "If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my father will love him, and we shall come to him and make our home with him" (Jn. 14:23).
3. It is further clear that the motive of love is the Divine goodness taken absolutely and as made known to man by faith. God is to be loved because He is infinitely good in Himself and worthy of man's love. Therefore He is to be loved for His own sake. To love God for His own sake is to love Him independently of the fact that He is man's source of help, or reward, or happiness. However, concupiscent love, which prompts hope, and benevolent love, which animates kind deeds, should not be taken as incompatibles. On the other hand, it is to be noted emphatically that the two (concupiscent and benevolent love) are not necessarily mutually exclusive in their existence; that is to say that the two can co-exist in the same individual at the same time. It is an error, therefore to discredit the workings, of Christian hope by asserting the contrary opinion.
4. Finally it is clear that the range of love is both God and persons(sic). God alone is all good and lovable. Man, however, in as much as he either actually shares by grace, or is at least capable of sharing, in Divine goodness, is included not excluded in supernatural love.

—These descriptions given by Bishop Okoye suggest that we are to love one another without any condition. For our families to be stable, we must learn to love and love well as enjoined by St. Paul in 1 Cor 13: 4-7, "love is patient and kind; it is not jealous or conceited or proud; love is not ill-mannered or selfish or irritable; love does not keep a record of wrongs; love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth. Love never gives up; and its faith, hope, and patience never ~~fails~~fail." We are called to love one another and sharing this love in the family requires patience. True love enables us to forgive wrongs done to us and frees us to maintain peaceful relationship with our family members. My hope is that God will inspire us to have true love for one another. And I hope that by now you have joined me is my mantra, let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

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Using Education to Establish a Culture Of Peace

Good evening dear listener. Today, we pray for all educational institutions both formal and informal that they may take seriously the work of teaching and inspiring young people to embrace peace.

In this edition of the programme, peace, I will discuss ideas related to using education to establish a culture of peace.

Today I like to repeat a sentence that the Vice Chancellor of Godfrey Okoye University, Prof. Christian Anieke, normally uses to help us understand the meaning of education. Prof. Anieke says that he loves the definition, “Education is a system which makes human beings out of animal”. Education is also considered a means of transmitting culture. Perhaps as you are listening to me this evening you can connect to these two understanding of education. Many people have been lamenting that family values, Igbo traditional ideology etc have been eroded and they trace the origin of the erosion to lack of proper home training and failure of our formal educational institutions to teach these values. If you agree with this notion, you will certainly understand that education has the capacity to transform culture and if this is the case, education can transform our violent tendencies into a culture of peace. Let us review how to build peace into our educational curriculum, how to use cooperative games and activities to modify our mindset and behaviour, how to make our families the seedbed of a culture of peace and how educational administrators can model this culture of peace.

The instructional material we give to our young people in our schools can actually deconstruct violence and promote peace. Take for instance, if we focus our lectures on violence in the world and how war is needed to restore the glory of a particular tribe, those we are teaching will overtime imbibe the understanding that war is needed to restore social status equity. In the past, many of our villages organized wrestling games where the loser becomes a subject to the winning village. In that competition, young people are thought to learn how to fight to assert superiority. No one ever cared to ask whether we need this superiority complex to reach the goals our good God has set for us. We just kept promoting the wrestling culture.

Today, our school ~~system also tends~~ to promote competitive activities like debates, wrestling, soccer etc. While we have rules that anyone who fights will be punished or expelled, we continue to promote the indices of fighting behaviour. I guess that most people have forgotten that apart from physical fight, there is also verbal fight that has the tendency to institutionalize violence. If you doubt this, try spending some weeks with families that quarrel most of the time. If you are not a quarrelsome person yourself, you would run away from the family for your dear life. Husbands with nagging wives can attest to this, wives with nagging husbands can also understand the violence in verbal fights and children of quarrelsome parents can also comprehend where I am going with the culture of verbal fights. I recall a few months ago, a young woman called me around 11pm and asked me to help her keep calm because her parents had been quarreling for hours and she could no longer contain it. The experience of this young lady reminded me of the emotional damage parents can do to their children when they quarrel often, sometimes over minor issues. What I am asking you to believe? I am asking you to understand that we can teach young people to embrace a culture of peace in our schools and at home. We can deliberately incorporate peaceful learning modalities into our teaching. We don't necessarily need a separate course to teach peace. We can teach cooperative education,

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assertiveness, values, virtues, multicultural issues and conflict management techniques in our lecture rooms. We can move away from competitive debating to synergic dialogue and non-violent discipline. Thinking about non-violent discipline, I shall present to parents and elders the concept of raising safe children next week.

In terms of the games we play in schools, I would like you to follow my line of thought that the way we play can bring about the development of a culture of cooperation and peace or institutionalize competition and aggression. Cooperative games like its counterpart, competitive games, have rules and require effort to complete. The difference is that cooperative games promote discipline and develop character and balanced personality. Also, whereas competitive games do have winners, cooperative games do not have winners or loser. ~~Cooperative games such as synergic dialogue builds~~ Cooperative games such as synergic dialogue build teamwork and self-confidence. If you watched Denzel Washington's movie ----- you would notice that a superordinate goal introduced to engender cooperation among the African American and Caucasians in Denzel's team helped them to overcome their racial prejudices and work together to achieve a collective goal. For a culture of peace to find its home among students, administrators' offices and their manner of leadership should reflect peace. Administrators would do well to move away from narcissistic leadership styles to the ~~type that engender~~ types that engender a culture of peace.

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Families as the seedbed of peace are expected to help their children to learn and live peace. Families must improve their communication and active listening skills as I suggested a few weeks ago. They must help young ones to learn the culture of appreciation, following directions, and practicing virtues. Parents must exemplify the culture of outdoing each other in showing charity and seeking for peaceful resolution of challenges they have in the family. It is very important for parents to allow their children to participate in family decision making so that the children will learn how to integrate others in decision-making processes. Every family must make it a point of duty to overcome intra-family violence and manage media violence properly if they want their young ones to develop this culture of peace. I am saddened whenever young people approach me in ~~counselling~~ counseling and talk about how their parents are teaching them how to hate certain individuals in their neighbourhood or how their parents inspire them to go out and engage other people in physical fight. I wonder what such parents are hoping to achieve in their families.

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My dear listener, I would like you to reflect on a culture of violence and peace. Try to read stories of peace and violence and see what type of emotions they arouse in you. I am certain that anytime you read or watch violent stories, you would more likely feel disturbed but when the stories are peaceful, you feel an interior peace. I would like to advise that you take time to share stories of peace with your loved ones, coworkers, children and even strangers. If you are an educator, think about how you might exemplify peace and go ahead and teach your students to embrace a culture of peace. If you are a parent, recall that we have said that families are the bedrock of education in the culture of peace. Find ways to help your children to learn and live peace. The idea that violence is helpful for achieving superiority is a fallacy. Do not allow your children to grow up with this notion. Do help them to develop a culture of peace. When you have done this, you would notice that a peaceful house breeds good communication, openness, maturity and development.

I wish all educators, formal and informal, a successful term for embracing and institutionalizing peace. I look forward to learning about peace activities in homes and schools. Please do let me know the outcome of your peace initiatives. Remember that I am available to assist you as needed in my capacity as a psychotherapist and your voice of peace. I invite you to the peace conference scheduled to hold at Godfrey Okoye University Enugu on Monday 7 October 2013. Please call 0806 561 3687 to indicate your interest in attending this conference.

May the peace of the Lord be with you my dear listener as I continue to pray "Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

And on behalf of my producer Fidelis Onoh, the studio Manager _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you a peaceful night rest.

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Being an Agent of Peace: Let Peace Begin with You

Good evening

Let me start by thanking all those who have been sending messages or calling me to appreciate the peace programme. Hon. Chinedu Monanu, my Onitsha and Enugu callers I appreciate you. Barr from Ebonyi State, you had requested that I do the programme in vernacular. I hope to begin the Igbo version in the near future. I thank Nutrifood's CEO who has undertaken to sponsor the Peace programme. Very Rev. Fr. Offor and Dr. T.F.I Nwanne who also supported the Peace programme. Dr. I.F.A. Uzoechi and many others.

Two weeks ago I talked about actions to take to facilitate peace when there is conflict. A lady tried to take the unexpected action that I suggested. She and her husband usually quarrel over certain matters and when they do, they don't talk to each other for days. This time, they quarreled at night about the behaviour of their child. In their usual way, they went to bed facing opposite sides of the wall. In the morning, the lady's usual behaviour is to ignore her husband who normally will try to leave the house before she gets up to make his food. This time around, the lady decided to do the unexpected. She got up and assisted her husband with his shirt, tie and suit. Her husband smiled at her and they began to talk to each other that morning.

I want to challenge you my listener to try something new to keep peace in your homes and families.

I have discovered that a peaceful disposition is greater than material wealth. I yearn for peaceful co-existence of all people but I recognize that the reality of having it depends on one person at a time. It is this understanding that leads me to try to go for peace at all circumstances and teach others to do the same. I would rather give up finest possessions than give up the opportunity for peace. I have sometimes placed myself in harm's way (according to other people) in my quest for peace. I remember discovering that one of my father's uncles was not happy with him. I prepared myself to go and see him. Individuals who knew my great uncle told me that I was playing at the lion's den and would get myself hurt. In my usual way, I prayed for the grace to remain focused and God granted me the grace to meet my great uncle. I heard his story and felt empathy for him. I can tell that he too felt my concern for him. Not only was I able to meet and speak with my great uncle, I became someone he reached out to for comfort and prayers. His wealth and power seemed intimidating to others but to me whose motivation was reconciliation, he was my great uncle who I could advise and pray for.

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At another time, I visited home from the United States and discovered that my extended family (great-grandfather's lineage) was involved in a conflict that has led to the development of factions and even consulting traditional powers. I felt pain and empathy for my people because I knew that they must be feeling anger and hatred. I braced myself and attended the men's meeting

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that was open to only men. I spoke to them about cooperation and the importance of forgiveness. I challenged them to call an emergency meeting of all our family members, fathers and mothers, young men and women for a resolution of the conflict. As our God would have it, they followed my lead and the conflict was resolved at home. Subsequently, those living in the United States and elsewhere were informed and they too made peace with each other. There was great rejoicing in our family compound that day as we ate and drank together again. The joy that I saw on the faces of our family members led me to feel that they were yearning for peace but perhaps the pride of life made it momentarily difficult for them to agree.

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I know that my extended family's story might resonate with other families who are at each other's throat because of minor or major issues. It might also resonate with clans and villages and even religious families at rancor. My hope is that someone experiencing this peace story might be inspired to be an agent of peace to end one conflict or another. Can you imagine what would happen if each of us touched one person's life with peace? We would have an explosion of stories of peace and perhaps my next volume of the stories would be so diverse and yet connected that many more people would be inspired to become agents of peace. Who knows, peace might become the next in thing among all Nigerians.

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Before I end my story, I must let you know that I am not a perfect agent of peace. There have been times when I struggled with letting go of hurts and moving on for peace to reign. There have been times when I struggled with staying focused. My most recent example of trying times was multi-faceted. A person I respected so much heard a single story about me and concluded that the story was true and abused me verbally. Another made up her mind that I took a decision that worked against her and circulated the information so wildly that some individuals reacted negatively towards me because of the single story. Another person abused me verbally so much that I yearned and prayed for death so that I could get away from the challenges forever.

I traveled for one month during this difficult period. On my way returning to this country where I had experienced the abuses, I found myself weeping uncontrollably in the aircraft as every second bringing me closer to Nigeria hurt my soul. I tried to put my feelings in writing and this is what I wrote:

When I left Nigeria on 30 March 2012, I was feeling very unhappy having come to the realization that Nigeria does not appreciate honesty. (This is a single story by the way because there are many people in Nigeria who love honesty). I remembered my students and felt that I needed to go on for them. I have tried so hard to learn from Jesus who knew that he was going to be betrayed by his own disciple and yet celebrated the last supper with all of them. I was hoping that although I know that I live and work among people who challenge my generosity and commitment to work, persons that I would give up my comforts for though they cannot stand up for me (this is also a narrow perspective because there are individuals who love and cherish me)- I thought that I would return to

my work with renewed spirit. Every minute drawing me closer to Nigeria hurts my heart and yet I felt a need to return to the country for my students.

So you see, the road to actualizing justice and peace can be thorny and depressing but finding a reason to continue despite all odds might be helpful when the going gets tough. Also, knowing that there are others who have struggled through similar circumstances might help us to get through the dark moments of our soul (St. Theresa of Avila). This is my inspiration for telling you some of my stories today.

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My dear listeners, with CNN, I would encourage you to go beyond borders and connect to people around our globe. You will find out that stories of life experienced in Nigeria do indeed resonate with people living a million miles away from us. This means that we must tell and hear multiple stories of peace, and who knows, the stories of peace we tell other people may decide to make their abode among us. We can indeed work together for justice by sharing our stories of peace on YouTube, I message, chat room, 2go, wiki, Facebook and other forms of media.

I thank you for listening to me. May God bless and grant us peace.

Competiting against the Situation and not against a Rival: The Story of the Hare and the Tortoise

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Good evening dear listener. We continue to pray for peace. In this edition of the programme, I will tell you the story of the hare and the tortoise and hopefully lead you to the understanding of alternative strategies for managing challenges in life and finding peace.

We had the peace conference as scheduled on Monday 6 October. It was well attended by young people and supported by staff of our university and other stakeholders. We were pleasantly surprised and encouraged to see the Hon. Comm of Education, Prof. Okoro, Comm for Human Development and Poverty Alleviation, Hon. Comm. Ogenyi, Comm for rural development, Hon. Comm Eric Oluedo, Commissioner 1 of Local Government Commission, Awka, Anambra State and my own brother, the Special Adviser on Millenium Development Goals, Chief Barr. Okezie Nwanjoku. The Vice Chancellor of our university, Very Rev. Father Prof. Christian Anieke and the Deputy Vice Chancellor, Prof. Edwin Onyeneje were present and engaged in the event to make the conference memorable for all the young people who came to discuss peace. Our Keynote Speaker, Comm. Ogenyi gave us food for thought and steered us in the direction of understanding how education can bring peace. We had many stories and some articles written by our resource persons. Among the stories that helped us to discuss peace was the story of the hare and the tortoise. I am now going to share this story with you.

Once upon a time, a tortoise and a hare had an argument about who was faster. I am the fastest runner said the hare. That is not true; The fastest runner is me replied the tortoise.

They decided to settle the argument with a race. They agreed on a route and started off the race. The hare short ahead and ran briskly for some time. Then seeing that he was far ahead of the tortoise, he thought he would sit under a tree for some time and relax before continuing the race. The hare said to himself, even if I take a nap, tortoise could not catch up with me. So he sat

under the tree and soon fell asleep. The tortoise plodding on overtook him and soon finished the race, emerging as the undisputed winner. This story tells us that slow and steady wins the race.

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But the story didn't end here. It continued. The hare was disappointed at losing the race and he did some soul searching. He realized that he had lost the race only because he had been overconfident and careless. If he had not taken things for granted, there is no way the tortoise could have beaten him. So he challenged the tortoise to another race. The tortoise agreed. This time the hare went all out and ran without stopping from start to finish. He won by several miles.

This story tells us that fast and consistent will always beat the slow and steady. If you have two people in your organization, one slow, methodical and reliable, and the other fast and still reliable at what he does, the fast and reliable person will consistently climb the organizational ladder faster than the slow, methodical person. It is good to be slow and steady; but it is better to be fast and reliable

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But the story does not end here. The tortoise did some thinking this time, and realized that there is no way he can win the race the way it was currently formatted. He thought for a while, and then challenged the hare to another race, but on a slightly different route. The hare agreed. They started off. In keeping with his self-made commitment to be consistently fast, the hare took off and ran at top speed until he came to a broad river. The finishing line was a couple of kilometers on the other side of the river. The hare sat there wondering what to do. In the meantime the tortoise trundled along, got into the river, swam to the opposite bank, continued walking and finished the race.

In this story, we learn that working to your strengths will not only get you noticed, but will also create opportunities for growth and advancement.

First identify your core competency and then change the playing field to suit your core competency. In an organization, if you are a good speaker, make sure you create opportunities to give presentations that enable the senior management to notice you. If your strength is analysis, make sure you do some sort of research, make a report and send it upstairs.

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But the story hasn't ended. The hare and the tortoise by this time, had become pretty good friends and they did some thinking together. Both realized that the last race could have been run much better. So they decided to do the last race again, but to run as a team. They started off, and this time the hare carried the tortoise till the river bank. There the tortoise took over and swam across with the hare on his back. On the opposite bank, the hare again carried the tortoise and they reached the finishing line together. They both felt a greater sense of satisfaction than they felt earlier.

In this part of the story, we learn that it is good to be individually brilliant and to have strong core competences; but unless you are able to work in a team and harness each other's core

competences, you will always perform below par because there will always be situations at which you will do poorly and someone else does well. Teamwork is mainly about situational leadership, letting the person with the relevant core competency for a situation take leadership.

Note that neither the hare nor the tortoise gave up after failures. The hare decided to work harder and put in more effort after his failure. The tortoise changed the strategy because he was already working as hard as he could.

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In life, when faced with failures, sometimes it is appropriate to work harder and put more effort. Sometimes it is appropriate to change strategy and try something different. And sometimes it is appropriate to do both. The hare and the tortoise also learned another important lesson. When we stop competing against a rival and instead start competing against the situation, we perform far better

When Roberto Goizueta took over as CEO of Coca-cola in the 1980s, he was faced with intense competition from Pepsi that was eating into Coke's growth. His executives were Pepsi-focused and intent on increasing market share 0.1 percent a time. Roberto decided to stop competing against Pepsi and instead compete against the situation of 0.1 percent growth. He asked his executives what was the average fluid intake of an American per day? The answer was 14 ounces. What was Coke's share of that market? Two ounces. Roberto said coke needed a larger share of that market. The competition wasn't Pepsi. It was water, tea, coffee, milk and fruit juices that went into the remaining 12 ounces. The public should reach for a Coke whenever they felt like drinking something.

To this end, Coke put up vending machines at every street corner. Sales took a quantum jump and others have never quite caught up.

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So my dear listener, never give up when faced with failure. Fast and consistent will always beat the slow and steady. Make effort to improve your speed and accuracy in any task you are doing. Work to your competences. Compete against situation, not against a rival. Remember that pooling resources and working as a team will always beat individual performers. So when the occasion calls for it allow the person with specific situation competences to lead.

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I pray that you commit this story to memory and remember it when you feel jealous or envious of another person's progress so that you can be inspired to do some soul searching, discover your own competences and work to your competences. I hope you can remember this story when you meet failure on your way to your goal so that you will never lose hope but rather put in more effort or change strategies. I hope you will remember it when the situation in your life, your family, work place and other settings calls for teamwork or situational leadership so that you can harness efforts with others and achieve outstanding results.

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I hope that this story will bring you peace. Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh, and the studio manager, _____, I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again same time next week for another edition

Overcoming Conflict and Installing Peace

At school, home, along the streets and corners of their living environment, youths are exposed to a high level of violence (Flores, 2010-). Within the home, school and community, the exposure is to vicarious violence and at the societal level, youths are exposed to toxic environments through the music they listen to and the television programmes they watch. The outcome of this exposure to violence through varied sources is negative influences on the cognitive and social development of youths. Adverse impact of exposure to violence includes difficulty in paying attention and focusing, sleep problems, withdrawal, irritability and failing in academic tasks. Most of us grow up with these cognitive and emotional challenges that eventually affect our perception of situations, events and people in our environment (Flores, 2010).

In present-day Nigeria, a lot of violent behaviours are noted in many areas of our nation. There are communities warring against each other, families at rancor, husbands and wives that are unable to communicate, coworkers who can hardly support each other in the workplace because they are not at peace, siblings who appear not to know anything about brotherly/sisterly affection, religious groups unable to find meeting grounds for peace, sects exterminating life as they would handle plants, kidnappers, armed robbers and torturers. The list can go on and on. We are challenged to find peace in the midst of the chaos created by violence. While some are working towards peace, some people continue to perpetuate conflict and violence.

The institutions of peace in our individual lives, families, communities, schools, towns, religion, states and nation calls for education on the contributing factors that inhibit peace and breed violence, and those that facilitates peace. We must be aware of our psychological tendencies and how to curb or control our behaviour regardless of our emotion at any given time or circumstance. We need to actively deconstruct hurtful habits or behaviours we have learned from experiences and the cognitive schemas that set us up for violent actions. Just as we learn faulty attitudes, we can learn good ones. We have the opportunity to decide to focus on our vulnerabilities and retain disfunctional behaviours or make the necessary adjustment to surmount the negative experiences we have had in the past and enshrine peace in our lives. Cognitive-behavioural psychologists can help people to find their pathway to peace. No case can be considered hopeless as long as there is still opportunity to learn new behaviour.

What we all need to ask ourselves today is which style of dealing with life challenges will we prefer. Or rather, I am asking us to choose to develop empathy towards others and hope for the future that will enable us to prefer peaceful modes of interaction to hostile or combative methods. In addition, we must watch for what Albert Bandura called selective moral disengagement in which he attempted to explain why some people regardless of their personal ethical system and values could be led into committing, tolerating and ganging up with morally culpable attitudes that advance violence (1986, 2002).

When we are faced with conflict, we can take the following steps to stay in control of our actions:

First thing - Noticing your body changes: Once you notice a new body signal while you are interacting with another person, STOP and THINK. Check what you are saying to yourself - Is your self-talk positive (e.g., I can cope with this challenge) or negative (e.g., Chibueze wants to fight with me. I will give it to him now.).

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When you have caught your body's reactions and what you are saying to yourself, you can choose what to do. Here are a few things you can do.

1. Take an unexpected line of action: If a person is deliberately saying annoying things to you, he or she is expecting you to react negatively by saying annoying things back to the person or engaging in physical fight. To counter this expectation, you can act as if the statements are compliment, smile and nod, agree with some of the statements or stay calm and cool.
2. Repeating positive self-talk: You can choose to make positive self-talks such as, "this statement is not directed to me as a person, it is meant for my role"; "I can manage this"; "Fighting is not necessary."
3. Empathizing: Allow yourself to be in the other person's shoes. Think about the many possible things that can lead people to display aggressive or hostile behaviour and let these lead you to empathy for the person saying hurtful things to you. Instead of feeling angry, disappointed or cheated, you might find yourself feeling sorry for the individual.
4. Using assertive statements: When expressing your feelings, use "I" statements such as I am feeling angry now because I don't like being called "stupid."
5. Using humor: If you are lucky to have internal capacity for being in a lighter mood, deploy this ability any time you are in a stressful situation because humor ameliorates the intensity of difficult feelings such as anger and sadness.
6. Reflecting on the consequences of fighting: Think about what might happen in the long-run if you start fighting physically - you or the other person may get hurt, you may receive punishment from an older person and if you are in school, you may be expelled. Are you comfortable with these consequences? If not, then STOP the FIGHT in its track before it happens. Take a deep breath, do the unexpected thing or walk away.

You might be wondering how a person who is already caught in conflict provoking situation can do these actions. The trick is "PRACTICE." If you don't already have the ability for staying "cool" when faced with challenges, you will need a lot of patience with yourself as you practice these skills. Remember that I told you earlier that once there is opportunity to learn, we can replace our faulty violent behaviours with peaceful actions.

It is in view of the opportunities to learn new ways of doing things, my beloved young people, that Godfrey Okoye University (GO University) has chosen to work with you on developing peace. As the champion of the Peace Initiative and a clinical community psychologist, I have decided to work with you over the course of two years from today. This project is beginning with this peace conference. You will learn about the determinants of peace and how to initiate peaceful approaches to solution of daily life challenges. You will participate in role plays, drama and essay on peace. Following the conference, I will continue to maintain contact with you and make myself available to support you, your families and communities in need of services for conflict resolution.

You will be required to submit stories of peace initiatives that you have fostered with your friends, families, schools and other people at least twice during the course of the two years peace intervention. These stories will be published in a book series for the purpose of training other

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youths in subsequent years and disseminating information about the peace initiative to the general public. I will ensure that our Peace Initiative provides video coverage for the peace work you will do with your friends, families and communities. We will then work with Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) to air selected peace projects that you submit to our initiative.

I expect that you will become agents of peace by the end of this conference so that you can promote peace. I wish you a peaceful and joyful conference. I believe in you and I know that you can drive the change that the world can trust as we try to give peace a home in our lives, families, towns and countries.

Thank you for listening and may God bless you!

Rev. Sr. Mary Gloria C. Njoku, DDL
Peace Initiative Promoter

**Peace can only be achieved by Understanding and not by Force: Brandon's Story on Israeli
– Palestinian Relations**

Good evening dear listener. We continue to pray for peace. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will discuss once again my inspiration for this programme, peace, and how important it is for us to share stories of peace.

I begin with a story sent for the annual youth peace conference by Brandon Gray. The youth peace conference shall be held in two days time, that is on Monday 6 October at Godfrey Okoye University. I invite you to open your heart to join us in the peace promotion agenda. Do something for peace on Monday and send your story of peace to me. Brandon Gray sent the following story in response to my call for stories of peace for the conference.

Here is an excerpt from Brandon's true story:

It was just after midnight in Israel when I landed, weak and weary from the twenty plus hours of travel. Ben-Gurion International airport, the only port of entry for most travelers into the Holy Land, is located just outside of Tel Aviv, a truly beautiful shore-side city with white sand beaches breaching the Mediterranean sea. My purpose in Israel was both academic and personal. Academically, I was traveling to Tel Aviv to join a group of graduate students, the majority of whom are pursuing graduate degrees in psychology at New York University (NYU), in a 6-week course. The purpose of this exploration was to examine identity, group dynamics, and their intersection in the stressful environment that is Israel. The opportunity seemed perfect for me both as a second year student in a clinical psychology-training program and as a self-proclaimed historian and pundit of the Middle East. It was a-dream-come-true to be in this place, to interact with this society, and to scratch the surface of living a life in this ancient yet modern land. During my undergraduate years, I put my personal interests in the area to use by obtaining a minor in political science, the majority of which consisted of classes in Middle Eastern studies. As a result, I entered this experience with a boisterous and misguided confidence in myself as quite knowledgeable in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. But I soon found out that I do not know the real story of Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Consider the perception of Ismail, a 47-year-old lawyer and Arab Christian living in Northern Israel. Ismail met with our group to discuss his organization's attempt to have all members of a certain non-Muslim faith labeled as such on their I.D. cards so they would not be confused as Muslim: "all Muslim's are thieves, liars, and murderers. They give us Arabs a bad name and we are sick of it" he said as our waiter in a small coffee shop handed him his tea. "THEY are the reason we don't have peace in the Middle East." Naturally, our group was offended by these malicious pronouncements. Yet, his prejudice remained. As we left the shop disheartened by the discussion, one of our group members noticed a silent look of discomfort on the face of the waiter. "I am sorry for what was said here, are you Muslim?" she tentatively asked to which he replied "yes, but it is ok, we cannot get mad at him every time he comes here saying these things." How astounding, this man could serve Ismail tea while he berated his religion. Furthermore, even in the face of this contradiction to Ismail's narrative, he avidly clung to the notion of a Muslim "other" as evil. This conviction even in the face of disproof is consistent in many narratives and drives much ignorance and violence today.

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Finally, a similarity that seemed most unfortunate of these narratives is that each is acknowledged only by its proponent party, and is adamantly and diametrically opposed by its opponent. By accepting one narrative and rejecting any validity to another, one serves only to perpetuate violence, to continue conflict, and to act as a barrier to peace. One does so by disrupting dialogue between any two opponents in deeming the “Other” as one of “THEM,” as an adversary in any processes towards conflict resolution, and as inherently evil. Yet, this seems to be the vastly common path in the majority of my encounters during my time in Israel. Even the educational system commits these acts of partiality. Indeed, state-sanctioned schooling in Israel often places Arab and Jewish children in separate schools, with separate curriculum, and no opportunity for interaction (Bekerman & Shhadi, 2003). Fortunately, next to this majority of opposition and segregation stands a small but powerful and steadfast minority.

Enter the Hand in Hand Center for Jewish-Arab Education in Israel founded by Amin Khalaf and Lee Gordon. Hand in Hand’s first school opened in 1998 and today boasts five successful locations, including a Jerusalem school, the location I was fortunate enough to visit. Hand in Hand’s mission is to educate Jewish and Arab children, in the same setting, at the same time, on the same curriculum. Coming into the classrooms in Jerusalem in the mid summer of my visit to Israel, I’ll admit I was skeptical. After many weeks of confronting such harsh and diametrically opposed narratives, I was beginning to think coexistence between Jews and Arabs would never be possible. Our visit to Hand in Hand renewed my faith. The classrooms combined Arab and Jewish teachers, who instruct in Arabic, Hebrew, and English. The curriculum consists of education on both a Palestinian and Jewish narrative, bridging the gap between two historical accounts in opposition. The school even celebrates both Israel’s independence day and Nakba Day, two holidays commemorating the same event, statehood for the Jewish people and the loss of a homeland for the Palestinians. I was truly amazed at what this school is accomplishing. Outside the Hand in Hand school, in the city streets of new and old Jerusalem, Jews and Arabs often interact only violently, and rarely become friends. Inside, they were becoming partners, classmates, lifelong friends, and advocates for change.

Albert Einstein, in a speech to the New History Society in 1930, said “Peace cannot be kept by force; it can only be achieved by understanding” (Calaprice, 2005, p. 158). These words posit a path to peace that not only calls for, but also demands understanding. The Hand in Hand school and other organizations like it are answering that call. Ignorance, racism, prejudice, and injustice that exist in Israel and Palestine today are nothing new to this world. In fact, if anything, they are staples in the development of any society. They have existed in many social fabrics, in many cultural orientations, and in many historical contexts. They exist today throughout the Middle East, in America, and around the world. However, their prevalence does not and should not equate to acceptance. In order to begin to truly eradicate these indignities, to step towards peace, it is my opinion that societies must begin with understanding.

As I boarded my final connection flight on my long journey back from Israel, I realized how misguided I had been in thinking there could be a “simple” solution for change, for peace. There is no simple path to peace. However, I also realized that there is always a first step. I am no expert in peace, I am no authority of cause and effect, and I do not pretend to have any answers for Israel, for Palestine, or for anyone for that matter. But, I know that peace, like all things, must begin somewhere. I choose to believe that it can begin when the “I” understands the “OTHER” in any narrative. That peace can begin when “MY” narrative and “THEIR”

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narrative becomes "OUR" narrative. That the first step is taken when "I" interact with "YOU" on a day to day basis, such as children in school. Here, in such a place and time, the conditions can be set for when "I" can understand "YOU."

My dear listener I hope you followed Brandon's story. Did you notice that outside the Hand in Hand school, Israelis and Palestinians had no "our" story and yet Jewish and Arab children were learning together in Hand in Hand school and creating "Our" story. Someday, this children will become the adults in charge of the affairs of these two warring nations and when that day comes, if by God's grace their learning has not been tainted by opposing experiences, these two nations shall finally know peace and have "our" story.

Brandon's story brought me to tears and to a reflection on the importance of our educational institutions becoming places where there can be an "Our story". Godfrey Okoye University Enugu, for example, prides itself as a university with the mission of *imparting quality education aimed at inculcating in students strong personality that will ensure the promotion of religious, cultural and epistemological knowledge*. I wonder whether the university understands the implication of this mission and whether the students themselves understand that their education is geared towards enabling them to become agents of peace. The three-pronged dialogues of the university, that is, religious, cultural and epistemic dialogues are the centre of several of the conflicts that have occurred in the Nigerian nation and among varied communities. I believe that when a person gets a good knowledge of religion, culture and unity of knowledge, the person will be in a position to tell "Our stories". This person will manage in-group and out-group ideologies well and promote peace.

I began this programme, peace, to tell our stories of peace and encourage us on our journey towards peace. I encourage you my dear listener to send stories of peace to me. The stories might lead us to form "Our Story." Nigeria needs "Our Story" to survive. We cannot continue to tell the Igbo, Hausa, Yoruba, Efik etc stories alone. Nigeria cannot survive on traditional, christian and muslim stories alone. Nigeria cannot survive on individual stories of Philosophy, Biology, Chemistry, Psychology and others alone. Nigeria needs "Our Story" to survive. Our families, communities and states need "Our Story" to make advancements and for sustainability. I invite you to key in to our story of peace. Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh, and the studio manager, _____, I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Knowledge Management in Organizations

Good evening dear listener. We continue to pray for the grace of collaboration so that we can collectively work towards achieving optimal goals. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will discuss knowledge management, focusing primarily on organizations.

As with my discussion of knowledge management in the family two weeks ago, I begin this discussion with the definition and background of Knowledge management. Knowledge Management, (KM) is a concept and a term that arose approximately two decades ago, roughly in 1990 which was understood as organizing an organization's information and knowledge holistically. Davenport (1994) offered the initial widely quoted definition: "Knowledge management is the process of capturing, distributing, and effectively using knowledge."

The Gartner Group created a second definition, which defines knowledge management as a discipline that promotes an integrated approach to identifying, capturing, evaluating, retrieving, and sharing all of an enterprise's information assets. These assets may include databases, documents, policies, procedures, and previously un-captured expertise and experience in individual workers."

Both definitions share a very organizational and, a very corporate orientation. KM, historically at least, is primarily about managing the knowledge of and in organizations.

The operational origin of KM, as the term is understood today, arose within the consulting community and from there the principles of KM were rather rapidly spread by the consulting organizations to other disciplines. The consulting firms quickly realized the potential of the Intranet flavor of the Internet for linking together their own geographically dispersed and knowledge-based organizations. Once having gained expertise in how to take advantage of intranets to connect across their organizations and to share and manage information and knowledge, they then understood that the expertise they had gained was a product that could be sold to other organizations. A new product of course needed a name, and the name chosen, or at least arrived at, was Knowledge Management. The timing was propitious, as the enthusiasm for intellectual capital in the 1980s, had primed the pump for the recognition of information and knowledge as essential assets for any organization.

Perhaps the most central thrust in KM is to capture and make available, so it can be used by others in the organization, the information and knowledge that is in people's heads as it were, and that has never been explicitly set down. Simply put, knowledge management is about collecting content and connecting people for the purpose of enhancing productivity.

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I reflected on some anomalies I noticed in government and private establishments. These settings seemed chaotic, redundant and heavily stressed in varied areas. I also thought about organizations, and offices that are the best they can be at any given time. Such organizations, and offices appear peaceful and well coordinated. One of the outstanding differences I noted about these two types of organization climate was the management of knowledge. In the ones that were dysfunctional, the focus of the leaders was on ensuring that they are seen to be the only shining star/ savior.

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The new paradigm suggest that knowledge management aids optimal productivity of an organization. This paradigm shift suggest a movement away from dogmatic and traditional approaches to organization. It is more pragmatic in the sense that it promotes what is expedient for the organization. The leader does not sit in his or her office reflecting on who is outshining each other in the work setting. Rather, the leader is busy noting the expertise skills and knowledge of each person and placing them where they can achieve optimal result. It is not about who have Abraham as father, my town's person, my friend or my family. It is about what each individual have to offer to the organizational advancement.

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There are certain offices that I have experienced a high level of redundancy. The supervisor in a bid to impress the higher end executives as the most knowledgeable or skilled person hires individuals who do not know their onions about their work. I have also noticed supervisors who hire individuals because they are members of their Church, town, clan or family without considering their contribution to organizational goals. For these types of settings, knowledge management is far from their mind. However, the motion has been set for knowledge management in organizational settings and if these types of organizations and offices remain where they are, they will be overtaken in due course and they will find themselves a misfit and be forced out of the organizational setting by their awareness of their lack of knowledge management competence.

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What I am saying to you my listener, the manager, CEO, supervisor and team leader? I am telling you that we entered an era of knowledge management in the 1990s and it is peaking now. Many progressive organizations have restructured their settings to embrace knowledge management. As I mentioned earlier, the focus of knowledge management is to capture and make available, so it can be used by others in the organization, the information and knowledge that is in people's heads as it were, and that has never been explicitly set down for the purpose of enhancing productivity. This means that a progressive leader would do everything in his or her power to encourage creativity, innovation and sharing of knowledge and skills in the work settings. No talent or giftedness should be allowed to waste. Tap the talents and encourage them to yield multiples.

I remember that I almost lost my zeal for sharing knowledge with others when I received a query letter rather than an appreciation for sharing knowledge with others. The Chief Executive Officer had asked me to train some persons on a particular skill. I agreed and offered this training service at no cost to the establishment. Before I knew what was happening there was a propaganda to

destroy my effort and a query was issued to me. I was disheartened by this experience when I realized that the CEO was aware of the query and approved it. I concluded that the setting was antagonistic to knowledge sharing and thus antagonistic to my gift of sharing knowledge. From that point, I had difficulty getting myself to share my knowledge and skills to groups at the request of the CEO and other leaders in the settings. I was only comfortable in one-to-one knowledge sharing. It took me time before I overcame the impact of this experience in my life. Till date, I remember it. The difference is that even with my memory of the experience of receiving a query for sharing knowledge, I have chosen to be myself and share my knowledge and skills without holding back and doing so at no additional cost to any organization where I work or belong.

I have decided to share my story of loss of courage to once again remind you that I am not a perfect peace promoter. I struggle like you and every other person on this planet earth. However, when I falter in my resolve to promote peace and factors that promote peace such as knowledge sharing, I get myself together again and continue the journey to peace.

The implication of my story for you the CEO, manager, and supervisor is that if you are already used to hiring people who are incompetent, if you have a knack for undermining talents or giftedness, it will take you time to regroup and join the knowledge management scheme. Consider today my clarion call to you to change the status quo in your organization for greater productivity. Remember that it is possible for the middle or the least person on the ladder of management to be the source of advancement in your organization. Do not lose the opportunity. Grab it when you see it. Encourage creativity, innovation and knowledge management. When you do so, you will be surprised how peaceful you will feel and how painlessly your organization would grow.

For you who have already keyed in to knowledge management, I encourage you to keep up the good work don't be discouraged by traditionalist who may try to stop you with all sorts of arguments and intrigues. However, if you falter like me, get up and continue the journey. When you have achieved optimal knowledge management in your organization, you will have peace and optimal productivity.

For you with skills and knowledge to share, do not hide it. If you do so, you will discover that the skills and knowledge will wither in due time due to non use. If you want your skills and knowledge to expand share them. I remember one of my brilliant students who found it difficult to share knowledge with other students. When she began to teach others what she knew, her grades improved to the point that she attained the overall best student of the faculty. So make a habit of sharing your skills and knowledge for the advancement of your organization.

For you who appear incompetent, with minimal skills and knowledge, reach out to others who seem to know more than you and learn from them. You will feel more peace when you develop appropriate skills and knowledge for tasks assigned to you. You will find yourself enjoying your work, spending less time in gossips and complaint and spending more time in doing what you know best, your work. I wish you well in your organization as I continue my mantra, let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh, and the studio manager, Effiong udoabasi, I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

A Call for Peace

Good evening dear listener. We continue to pray for peace. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will discuss the theme of this year's international day of peace, "Right of people to peace."

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Last week I had discussed knowledge management as it pertains to families with a promise to focus on organizations today. I crave your indulgence to move my discussion of organizational knowledge management to next week. I wish to move this topic because last Sunday 21 September was the international day of peace. I wish to present the theme of this year's International Day of Peace beginning from UN's message.

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Before I continue, I wish to apologize to some individuals who contacted me for assistance but I was unable to follow-up as agreed due to a challenge I encountered on Saturday which got worst on Sunday making it impossible for me to fulfill tasks that I took on from my callers. Please note that I plan to assist you as soon as I have managed the challenge.

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Now, back to our peace agenda of the day: Each year the International Day of Peace is observed around the world on 21 September. The UN's General Assembly declared this day a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples.

The Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace recognizes that the promotion of peace is vital for the full enjoyment of all human rights. In 2001, the General Assembly by unanimous vote adopted resolution 55/282, which established 21 September as an annual day of non-violence and cease-fire.

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The United Nations invites all nations and people to honour a cessation of hostilities during the Day, and to otherwise commemorate the Day through education and public awareness on issues related to peace. The United Nations Secretary wrote: Today is the International Day of Peace. Each year, on this day, the United Nations calls for a global ceasefire. We ask combatants to put down their arms so all can breathe the air of peace. Armed conflict causes untold grief to families, communities and entire countries. Too many are suffering today at the brutal hands of warmongers and terrorists. Let us stand with them in solidarity. Peace and security are essential foundations for social progress and sustainable development. We must douse the fires of extremism and tackle the root causes of conflict. Peace is a long road that we must travel together – step by step, beginning today.

The Secretary also asked for the observance of one minute silence. Dear listener please join me in observing this one minute silence.

Let us all reflect on peace – and what it means for our human family. Let us hold it in our hearts and minds and tenderly nurture it so it may grow and blossom.

So what is peace? Johan Galtung's theory of peace is the predominant meaning people tend to ascribe to peace. Galtung defined peace as the absence of violence (Barnett, 2008). Whereas the United Nation considers peace an essential feature of human existence, many people still think of peace in the context of nuclear peace and security. The statement, "si vis pacem, para bellum" meaning "if you want peace, prepare for war" attributed to Flavius Vegetius Renatus (375 AD), seem to be used by varied entities in different ways. While some believe that the statement suggests that war is necessary for peace, some understand it to mean that peace require effort and strength.

Over the past half-century observers have come to see peace as a much broader concept. The Catechism of the Catholic Church- (2304), fits this later model, holding that peace is not merely the absence of war, and it is not limited to maintaining a balance of powers between adversaries. Peace requires safeguarding the goods of persons, free communication among men, respect for the dignity of persons and peoples, and the assiduous practice of fraternity. This definition holds that peace is "the tranquility of order," the work of justice and the effect of charity.

Dr. Leonard Jason and I in our most recent work on peace defined peace as a human rights issue that involves respect for human dignity, and is associated with personal and social identity, justice, social responsibility, altruism, accountability, empathy, communication, charity, sense of community, sense of control, fairness, wellness, environmental harmony, environmental safety, security and access to basic amenities such as food and shelter.

If you paid attention to the definition of peace in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the most recent definition of peace, you would notice that peace encompasses a lot of factors that make life progressive. When I began work on peace in Chicago USA in 2003, I was guided by my clinical supervisor to understand and implement violence prevention. My work then was to assist 5 year old kindergarten children who were already exhibiting extreme violence to learn new ways of encountering life. I used violence prevention models in my work. You might be surprised to hear that 5 year old children exhibit extreme violence. I was surprised too the first time I observed how the children manifested violence in the school setting that I had to do a comprehensive assessment of the history of violence for each of the children. The most common factors I noted in the assessments were parental history of violence and divorce. I felt sad that the environment in which the children lived had played the role of making them more prone to violence.

You would think that this type of situation can only happen in a place in the United States of America. Think again and you will realize that it is also prevalent here in Nigeria, in our state, the very community in which we live and in our families. I was indeed saddened the first year I began the annual youth peace conference at Godfrey Okoye University Enugu, when a student whom I call Abel from one of a secondary schools here expressed that he was punishing a ~~junior~~ junior student, Chijioke, in his school because this Chijioke's brother, Mike, punished him when Mike was his senior in the same secondary school. At this conference, it took much

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explanation to get Abel to understand that it was not right for him to punish Chijioke who did not engage in any behaviour that warrants the punishment. Abel felt that he was ~~retaliating~~ retaliating the action of Mike, Chijioke's brother. During the intervention with Abel at the conference, I discovered that Abel's mindset and behaviour represents that exhibited by many of us. I wondered loudly how anyone could feel comfortable hurting or punishing a person who did nothing in his or her own capacity to warrant such punishment. The only way I was able to make sense of this type of mindset and behaviour was in the context of learning.

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Learning is defined a relatively permanent change in behaviour due to experience. I felt that most of us develop violent tendencies because of our previous experiences. Having arrived at this conclusion, I concluded that the Annual Youth Conference would be a platform for learning peace promotion idealogies and behaviour. From this standpoint, I began to focus more on peace attributes such as respect for human dignity, personal and social identity, justice, social responsibility, altruism, accountability, empathy, communication, charity, sense of community, sense of control, fairness, wellness, environmental harmony, and environmental safety. We have learned that peace is not merely the absence of war but a conglomeration of the factors I enumerated. If you too like me have grasp the importance of peace promotion, I expect that you will take seriously any opportunity you have to practice respect for another person, self control, fairness, charity, empathy, accountability, good communication, sense of belonging and other peace promotion behaviours.

On this day, as I reflect on the meaning of peace, I encourage you to remember that we must travel the road to peace together. Do something for peace today, tomorrow, the next day and the next day. I have no doubt that we shall succeed in our collective effort to let peace be a member of our family, community, state and country.

I shall end this edition here. Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh, and the studio manager, _____, I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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One and Then Another: Peace through Forgiveness in Rwanda

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Good evening dear listener. We pray today for the grace to forgive people who hurt us. In this edition of the programme, peace, I begin my discussion with the story of the women who made the decision to bring peace through forgiveness in Rwanda

One and Then Another: Peace through Forgiveness in Rwanda

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This is the story of a group of women who have made the extraordinary decision to forgive. In 1994, the unimaginable happened in Rwanda, as hatred between Hutus and Tutsis exploded into violence. Neighbor turned against neighbor, killing an estimated 800,000 people in only 100 days.

This could be the start of a story that many other countries can tell: y-Years of civil war, a-A deeply ruptured society, c-Children who have never known peace, b-But it's not.

In 2008, I spent a few precious months with a group of women in Rwanda called SEVOTA. Much of my time in Rwanda was spent just listening to these remarkable women's stories. I remember one morning sitting outside with SEVOTA's founder Godeliève Mukasarasi, as a large group of prisoners in pink jumpsuits came walking along the road picking up trash. This is not an uncommon sight in Rwanda, where prisons still overflow with accused *genocidaires*.

It was somewhat unnerving to see these convicted killers file by us one-by-one, so I was relieved to see a friend of ours, let's call him Alain, wave to us from across the street. As we walked over to greet him, Godliève mentioned nonchalantly, "You know, he just finished his community service last month." My stomach dropped at the reminder that not every killer wears a pink jumpsuit. "What did Alain do to require community service?" She waved her hand dismissively, "He participated in the genocide. I don't remember exactly." Then in the daily miracle that is Rwanda, this man who committed acts of genocide embraced this woman who lost family in the genocide.

What I soon learned is that at SEVOTA, this scene is anything but abnormal. SEVOTA is an association of widows from the genocide, who gather together to share each other's burdens through group trauma counseling. All of the women lost many friends and family members and experienced extraordinary violence themselves. Many had been raped repeatedly, leaving some HIV-positive and mothers to their rapists' children.

I sat with one of the women one hot, quiet afternoon and listened to her explain how she survived the genocide, how so many people she loved did not, and how she finally managed to forgive. When she finished, she closed her eyes and sighed, as though she had laid down a heavy burden. There was silence between us for a moment. I could feel my heart closing up as I was confronted with my own inability to forgive, even this thing that was not my story. I said, "I don't know how anyone could forgive something like that." She scolded me, "No! No human can forgive something like that. Only with God."

Within the international peace-building community, there are two predominant narratives about the Rwanda story. One says that the forgiveness taking place in Rwanda is an illusion, necessary to maintain social order, but not a true state of the heart. Another is that the forgiveness is a miracle so unique that it cannot be replicated elsewhere.

As I began hearing the worst stories humans have to tell, I realized that both points of view have a kernel of truth in them. After months of seeing these women talk and cry about atrocities that occurred over a decade and a half, I learned that they had not forgiven. Every day, they *are* forgiving and must do so over and over again for the community to hold together.

Their ability to forgive is a miracle, though not in the sense that it has descended from heaven in a flash of easy transformation. I remember a quote from the genocide memorial in Kigali: "The Nazis did not kill six million Jews... Nor the Interahamwe kill a million Tutsis, they killed one and then another, then another..." If I accept that is how the genocide happened, as a series of individual acts of hate, it becomes even more terrifying. Instead of imagining a faceless mob that swept the country, I have to think about my friend Alain, who one day decided to pick up his machete and go look for his neighbor.

But this quote gives me hope too, because I believe that it is the same way peace happens. Rwanda's future is composed of a million choices to forgive and what I saw at SEVOTA was only one small part of the heart-wrenching reconciliation happening across the country. If a widow in Remera-Rukoma can forgive the people who took her family, if a mother in Gitarama can forgive the men who raped her and gave her AIDS, and if millions of other victims can forgive millions of other *genocidaires*, then Rwanda will have its miracle, a miracle built of blood, tears, and the hardest work of the heart.

Dear listener, I don't know whether this story made sense to you at all. This true human experience in Rwanda reminded me of the place of forgiveness in creating and sustaining peace. Many families are torn apart because of inability to forgive hurts meted out by their members. The father nurses anger and frustration towards the mother of the house and withdraws affection. The mother nurses similar grievances and also withdraws affection. And what you get from this catastrophe is either separation or divorce. When this happens, the children suffer as the shuttle from one house to another. I have reflected on this issue previously and had reminded you that forgiveness is a necessary element of good living and peace. I also informed you that you the husband is an imperfect human being married to an another imperfect human being and therefore, it is ridiculous for you to expect perfection. What I advice you husband; what I advise you wife; is to learn to forgive as soon as you face a challenge from each other. If you let the problem linger, other people may come in between and create more calamity.

My dear listener, I had told you previously to try doing the unexpected thing to overcome rancor and hate. Take for example, if you normally keep malice with your husband anytime you quarrel or when you make a request that he is unable to grant. This time around, If your husband's behaviour makes you to feel offended and hurt, instead of keeping malice with him, I want you to do something that can put a smile on his face. Let's say you managed to go to bed at night angry. In the morning, I want you to wake up resolved to forgive the issue that made you angry. Even if you are still feeling angry or hurt, pull yourself together, share pleasant morning greetings with your husband. If you are a kissing couple, do not leave your bed without kissing

your husband. My dear listener, for your own peace of mind and harmony in your home, always resolve to forgive your loved one who offends you. Forgiveness is the antidote to pain and hurt. If you make it a habit to begin to practice unexpected goodwill and goodness towards your husband, I am certain that he too will begin to find ways to outdo you in showing love and understanding.

My dear listener, the husband, what I have said to your wife is what I am saying to you. I want you to take these injunctions seriously. I really want you to have a happier and peaceful home. That is why I am asking you to choose forgiveness over keeping malice, staying angry and frustrated. I know you have the capacity to do something positive in your life. Please make it a point of duty to overcome anger and hate with love and empathy.

Remember that I am accompanying you with prayers and goodwill. Stay on the course of forgiveness and positive attitude for the peace of your family. If you do this, your children will learn to be peaceful too and you will enjoy having them around you.

As always my dear listener I wish to conclude by praying, let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Many Hands Make Light Work: The Kenyan Story

Good evening dear listener. We pray today for the grace to cooperate with the Holy Spirit so that we can fulfill our christian duties. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will join the Holy father, Pope Francis to echo that there are no part-time Christians; faith is a full-time job. I begin with the message of Pope Francis

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John F. Kennedy once said, "One person can make a difference, and everyone should try." I will add that if we want to be peace-makers, we only need to recognize opportunities and to try. We don't need to give up our daily lives and interject ourselves into conflict. We only need to do simple things.

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A year before my visit to Kenya in 2009, the country was rocked by political violence. —While proximate causes can be debated *ad infinitum*, poverty and inequality were at its root. —Poverty and inequality are the usual suspects when violence erupts and the rule of law fails a people. They are the perpetrators that push people into violence, and all the people are the victims. — To address violence we need to provide people with other options to escape poverty and provide them with equality of opportunity.

My story as a peace-maker in Kenya is one of serendipity. During a safari through Kenya, my husband, Patrick, and I became friends with our guide, Eric Chelule. Because we wanted to see the real, modern-day Kenya, and not just the preserved tribal cultures of the Masai and the Samburu, we asked to visit his village. He brought us to the remote, mountain village of Sogoo Location. We met Eric's brother, Pastor Mathew Chelule, and learned that members of his small church had taken five girls who were orphaned due to AIDS into their care. They were feeding, sheltering and educating them to keep them out of poverty and provide opportunities.

We met the girls, Mercy, Faith, Abigail, Mercy and Dorcas. Mathew showed us their rented rooms. We met their caregivers and witnessed the love and support provided to them. We learned about plans to build a home for 80 orphans and to create and implement an HIV/AIDS awareness program. We decided to try to help them.

We told our friends and family about the small church in Sogoo, and in December 2009, when Patrick returned to Kenya for work, they generously donated money for school fees and for clothing, mosquito nets, linens, shoes and school supplies. Patrick carried these with him in two huge suitcases. While he was gone, I researched ways to support this project.

I found that seeking funds from foundations and government agencies was like shooting in the dark. More success could be found in further appeals to friends and family. It was easy to tell a story in the context of five actual children and to relate that malnutrition, disease and poverty could prohibit their attendance at school, and that the lack of education would rob them of the opportunity to participate in the life and development of their country.

I formed a non-profit organization, the Sogoo Children's Project, to maximize fundraising opportunities, and my friends and family responded. They are donating and trying innovative approaches to help out. One friend asked people to contribute in memory of her daughter, who had died after a tragic accident while working in Africa. Another delivered clothing to a

consignment shop. The proceeds of sales would be her donation to the Project. Another sponsored a *Sipping and Painting Fundraiser* where guests sipped favorite beverages, learned to paint, created artworks and contributed to Sogoo. Still another ran a marathon to raise funds. A cousin who paints and sells furniture had a client make a donation to the project in lieu of payment for her work. Finally, one friend's company made a contribution based on the number of volunteer hours he completed. Importantly, now I am getting checks from people I don't even know, friends of friends, seizing the opportunity to help a small community rescue AIDS orphans from poverty and inequality.

Since establishment of the project, all the children are attending school on a regular basis, an interim home was constructed and five acres have been purchased for the permanent orphanage and farm. Five more girls, among the most severely mal-nourished and sickly orphans in the region and a 5-year-old boy have entered care. He now has ten older sisters to dote on him. Reports from Sogoo are that all of the children – from young Dominic to 16-year old Mercy – are thriving, happy and doing well in school. Step by step, one child at a time....

Knocking down barriers that keep children from reaching their full potential begins with putting a focus on their "peace of mind" – going to sleep with a full stomach under warm blankets, rising the next morning to start another day at school and being surrounded by a community that loves them. Along with friends and family, helping a community to ensure its children lead healthier and better lives provides a happy outcome to a serendipitous journey. Many hands make light work, or as the Kenyans say, "Harambee."

A Women's Grassroots Peace Movement in Sulawesi, Indonesia

As always my dear listener I wish to conclude by praying, let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.
On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Peace Education ~~w~~Without Borders: A story from the Teachers Without Borders
Peace Education Program

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Good evening dear listener. We pray today for the grace to live peace and educate young people to embrace peace. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will start my discussion with a story from Teachers without Borders and connect it to our own reality in Nigeria

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~~Peace Education Without Borders: A story from the Teachers Without Borders~~ Peace Education Program

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As I rode the train to the US-Mexico border, which I would cross to facilitate a 4-day peace education workshop with teachers in Tijuana, I read an editorial in the local paper about the drug-related violence in Mexico. The author argued that the US needs to make the violence in Mexico a top foreign policy issue, outlining a number of solutions, ranging from increased military support to dealing with the domestic demand for narcotics.

Education was not mentioned as a solution in this article. But education – peace education - is my offering . It might not be the "magic

-bullet" that will quickly fix the problem, but it is a long-term, sustainable part of the solution that might lead to an end to the violence and a more stable, peaceful society. And peace education is needed on both sides of the border – across all borders.

The Teachers Without Borders Peace Education Program equips teachers with the tools they need to be agents of peaceful change in their communities. In my experience as the TWB Peace Education Program Coordinator, all I do is plant the ~~seed,seed~~ and educators run with it, creating ways to bring peace education to life that I could have never imagined. Or rather, the seed is there – educators often come to the field of *education* because they desire to make a difference in the world. Peace education is a natural fit with this inclination, and we just have to nurture this seed and allow it to grow and flourish.

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Before I left, I was telling someone about my trip to Tijuana, and they asked, with disbelief and skepticism, "What can *teachers* do about the violence?" To me, the teachers have one of the most important roles to play in society in general, and particularly in addressing the culture of violence. No, teachers are not going to immediately stop the drug cartels ~~who~~that are waging war against one another and Mexico's citizens. But teachers can instill the values of equality, justice, compassion, and empathy in their students and teach them skills to solve conflicts and find creative solutions. They may not stop the bullets from flying today, but they might stop a student from picking up a gun or joining a gang tomorrow.

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With these thoughts on my mind, I arrived at San Ysidro, the busiest border crossing in the world. I walked across the pedestrian bridge, a teacher without borders, leaving the US behind to go work with teachers just a few miles south but a world away. As there was no border patrol or security, I imagined that every day, guns cross that border as easily as I did, that my suitcase, which was chock-full of peace education manuals, could have just as easily been filled with semi-automatic weapons.

The group of teachers from Escuela Preparatoria Lazaro Cardenas were animated and eager to talk about peace education, in spite of it being an early hour during their mid-year holiday. The

discussion flowed easily in a mix of Spanish and English, and the teachers showed a strong desire to create peace in their classrooms, school and community.

When we discussed peace, they brainstormed words such as solidarity, compassion, equality, and democracy. Peace is commonly misunderstood as merely the absence of war, but this did not enter into their definition, which was based on the presence of values and traits. When talking about the importance of relating learning to the students' lives, we discussed the kinds of violence that their students experience. I expected drug violence near the top of the list, as in the US, this is all we hear in the media about Mexico. However, the teachers listed forms of violence that are very similar to what US students experience: physical and psychological bullying, exclusion, domestic violence. While the drug violence certainly plagues Tijuana, the reality for high school students is much more similar to their US counterparts than I had imagined.

In closing the workshop, some of the participants described how the peace education workshop had impacted them:

"It allows me to think about how my attitudes contribute or not to peace."

"I am better able to create and develop peace and justice awareness in my students so that they could spread the word and become better world citizens."

"It allows me to profoundly reflect on my job as a teacher and a human being."

My dear listener, I hope that you were able to follow this story that documented the effort of one person in galvanizing and teaching other teachers about peace education. Several of my previous Peace programmes have focused on this subject matter. Today, I have revisited this topic using the story of teachers without border as a reference point.

Like the teacher in today's story, I believe that teachers have one of the most important roles to play in society in general, and particularly in addressing the culture of violence. Teachers are not going to immediately stop the great violence in our society. But teachers can instill the values of equality, justice, compassion, and empathy in their students and teach them skills to solve conflicts and find creative solutions. They may not stop the bullets from flying today, but they might stop a student from picking up a gun or joining a gang tomorrow. This means that the seed the teachers plant today in students will yield their harvest in due time. Our goal should be raising a new generation with the sense of equality, justice, compassion, forgiveness, empathy, social responsibility and similar values that support peaceful lifestyle.

This evening, I am calling on all teachers to make it their responsibility to live and teach peace to their students. Imagine what would happen in the next ten years if all young people from kindergarten to the university levels are learning about peace in their classrooms and on the playgrounds. I believe that we will have many peace ambassadors working to give peace its place in our country, Nigeria.

On my part as a teacher, I have chosen to write my name on this peace programme and through the annual youth peace programme as well as in my lecture rooms. Our newest initiative is the foundation of the Peace Club of Nigeria. At the last youth peace conference, students from secondary schools and universities after learning about peace engaged in a general discussion on how to contribute to the institutionalization of peace in our country. The participants

unanimously agreed to form peace clubs in their institution. Following this mandate, I developed the peace club charter for Nigeria and we are now calling on teachers and agents of peace to join in this massive effort to begin peace clubs in all our educational institutions. If you are interested in championing the peace club in your school, please call me at 0806 561 3687 to request the peace club charter or log on to our website, www.ipsyp.org to download the charter.

I pray that we will have many peace clubs springing up in our institutions. I pray that God will inspire teachers and other people to become champions of peace.

And as always my dear listener I wish to conclude by praying, let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

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On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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How can I Change my Country: The Story of Vanessa Bassil of Beirut

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Good evening dear listener. We pray today for the grace to contribute our individual effort to create and sustain peace. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will present the story of peace written by Vanessa Bassil of Beirut, Lebanon.

Vanessa Bassil wrote. What can I do to make a change in my country? I started to ask this question when I realized the amount of problems that the new generation has inherited from the civil war that lasted more than 15 years. In a country which is composed of 18 religions and which is soaked in a serious political division, the possibility of change seems almost impossible.

I was convinced that Peace settlement, my biggest dream ever, is an urgent need for the society that I live in. It hurts me to see youth living in a continuous tension and never ending conflicts, and refusing each other because of their differences. Diversity, Diversity is a source of richness. However it seems to be a cause of conflicts and wars in my country. I couldn't stay motionless in front of intolerance and hatred among my people.

Therefore, I decided to act!

10 months ago, I volunteered in a 1- year project called RAY: Responsible and Active Youth for positive change, within the Outreach and Education program, in LAEF association (Lebanese Association for Education and Formation).

Every Wednesday, and on a weekly basis and after my university classes, I used to join, 7 other core volunteers who dedicated also their time to take part in this project which aims to create a toolkit of peace building and conflict transformation and to implement it in 3 different Lebanese communities.

We were an amazing group, young, flexible, energetic and impressively positive. We were from different religions and Lebanese regions putting our efforts all together in order to create "something". We didn't know at the beginning what that "thing" could be, but we strongly wanted to make a change through it.

We wanted that tool to be creative, youthful, alive, useful and practical. What could It be? After several meetings of brainstorming; Hussein, Ramzi, Sabine, Leyla, Hassan, Mira, Hiba and I, with the help of the program manager Justine and the consultant Jean-Paul, finally found the answer: a GAME!! Yes, the toolkit will be a game! As a team, we have always believed in the importance of learning through playing. Having -fun was initially a golden rule in RAY team!

The toolkit reflected perfectly our spirit, beliefs and convictions. During 3 months, we put the content and the rules of the board game that we decided to name "LET'S TALK!", emphasizing on the importance of dialogue in peace building processes. In this game, 4 players will be playing a conflict scenario according to the role sheets that they receive, and as they will move respectively through the dice from a place to another, they will be facing squares like "tips" about other players, "perceptions", "negotiations", "time"; an important factor in conflicts, etc. Through this game, players will gain negotiation and communication skills and will learn how to deal with conflicts positively.

After several meetings of reflection, thinking and surely fun, we were ready to go to the communities and play the board game. We have chosen 3 communities: Beirut Arab University (BAU), Rawda high school (in Beirut) and Yammouneh Club (Bekaa region, East Lebanon)

Before the starting date of the communities' actions, we selected 7 volunteers from each community and gave them capacity building training and explained to them the process of playing the board game. They have also chosen a specific conflict that they lived in their communities and "played" it through the "LET'S TALK" game. The conflicts were about a love story, gender discrimination and a problem between students and teacher.

The 21 volunteers, trained and well-equipped, were excited more than us to get the feedback on the board game in their communities. We spent 3 days in each one, giving a full day training on peace and conflict and playing "LET'S TALK!" through both their conflict scenarios and ours.

"I learned through "let's talk" game how much it is important to know others' feelings, perceptions and needs in a conflict", said Walid, one of the participants. Another one stated: "I didn't know that putting myself in others' shoes is so difficult, but it is amazing how it can positively affect the conflict". Yehia realized after playing the game that "a conflict is an opportunity to make positive relationships". Nataly learned the importance of taking off all the assumptions and prejudices in order to make Peace.

Hearing those success stories from the communities brought about big happiness for us. We were satisfied by the success of our "peace creation". We are currently preparing for the closing event of the project and ready to share all these lessons learnt with the public. As for me, I am waiting for that moment when I will go on stage and scream out to the media, stakeholders, family and friends: "I have proudly contributed in making one step towards Peace!"

This is Venesa's story. My dear listener, what is your own story? Can you confidently get on stage and scream out to the media, stakeholders, family and friends: I have proudly contributed in making one step towards peace! Nigeria is in a quagmire at this present time with conflicting religions, enormous political divisions and ethnic divide. Can you see or feel the possibility of change? Or does change seem impossible to you? Are you wondering what you, an individual, could add to install peace in our country?

Like Venessa, you must convince yourself of the need for peace and acknowledge that it is possible to contribute to making peaceful co-existence a reality in our country Nigeria. Then you might need to seek out other people who are interest in peace efforts, join forces with them and do something.

You must think and use your brain to develop and implement the solution you generated. During our last youth peace conference, we had a full house of undergraduate and secondary school students. As we dialogued on peace, we were moved unanimously to begin peace clubs in our schools with the goal of finding ways to make our families and schools peaceful and thus create sustainable peace in our communities. If you are a school administrator, a teacher or a student, you can join the Nigerian school peace club movement. If you are interested in this initiative, please call me at 0806 561 3687.

You can also choose other ways of contributing to peace in our country. Like Venessa, I am deeply convinced that peace settlement, my greatest life dream, is an urgent need for our country, Nigeria. It hurts me to see youth living in a continuous tension and never ending conflicts,

families at rancor and young people refusing each other because of religious or ideological differences and resorting to killing others in the name of religion.

During my studies, I learned that diversity is a source of richness and strength. Here in our country, diversity appears to be a cause of conflicts, violence and bloodshed in my country. I cannot stay motionless in the face of the intolerance and hatred I see and feel among my people. The vibe that I am getting is strongly antagonistic. I must do something to contribute to creating and sustaining peace. I wish to become a true angel of peace. How about you? I believe that you too can become angel of peace because our country need many angels to rise above the conflicting religions, political divisions and ethnic divide that have engulfed us in unending violence.

Let us pray fervently for the grace to seek and live peace. Let us become peacemakers. Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons and daughters of God (LK 11).

So let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me. On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Youths are necessary Instruments for Peace: The Story of Pastor Elvis Iruh

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Good evening dear listener. We pray today for the grace to do something for peace. In this edition of the programme, peace, I begin with a story of a Kenyan youth peace project written by Pastor Elvis Iruh.

In the cloud of uncertainty after the violence that greeted the general elections of 2007, a group of youths formed an association called Destiny Vision youth group (DVYG) with the sole objective of promoting peace and reconciling youths from various tribes across the country into a new unity and front where youths will no longer be used as political thugs or used to foment violence in Kenya. The initiative as good as it sounds was faced with the challenge of how to mobilize youths who are caught up in the fight and violence and divided on tribal lines? The group leader, Brian Magwaro, himself from a different tribe (Kisii) refused to be deterred despite threats to his life and that of his family. He refused to flee from the city when others fled, that singular act of courage gave him hope that Kenyan youths could come together to make a difference where the politicians had failed them.

His first approach was via the church promoting peace through the Kenyan word, "PAMOJA" meaning togetherness. The churches gave him platform to address youths and he invited them out for picnic and to hold discussions with them.

Through the meetings, great initiatives came out; one of them was to organize a caravan across the country with open van, musicals, flyers, T-shirts, talent show, public talks, debate on peace building and spending time with each community. They preach the message of peace building, reconciliation and development among the youths and the general populace.

According to the Foundation Director, Brian Magwaro, the intention is to use the lives of these youths as models for peace building to encourage the adult folk to stop every form of hatred, violence and embrace genuine reconciliation ahead of 2012 elections.

The foundation established community development through sports project; to engage children who naturally would be idle and criminally minded into sporting stars by engaging them in sporting activities like football. The youths meet twice a month to take part in community work. The youths clean, clear bushes, dig ditches, sweep their environs among other activities. The foundation supplies the youths with hand gloves, face gears and other working tools. The sports' project slogan is "Play for Fun, learn for Life".

LEARNING CENTRES

This foundation also initiated a project for after school program where children and youths from the slums of Kisumu come together and share knowledge through book reading. The books they used were donated by a Dutch organization, 'Coachitnetwork'. This helped the youths to improve their vocabulary and complete their school home work.

GO GREEN PROJECT

This project is to sensitize the youths on climate change by educating them on global warming matters. The activities include planting trees, proper waste management among others things.

I tell their story because these are youths who themselves were once victims of the political violence that took place in Kenya; they had family members displaced, friends forced to move away and never reunited again but they are determined to make a difference and broadly say no to violence and promote peace at all cost.

This group was noticed during the FIFA world cup preparation for South Africa 2010 when they were recruited as official youth group to promote the world cup among other youths in East Africa.

The group continues to strive for excellence, more recently they staged a tournament aim at promoting and embracing peace and reconciliation in their surroundings by organizing a soccer tournament for youths across the country. Each region sent a male and female team to the competition which had the theme, "Say No to Violence".

The uniqueness of this foundation is the determination of a group of four youths envisioning others by providing them with dependable community resource support to create awareness about peace and non-violence approach to issues in the country; politicians had not succeeded with mobilizing the people for peace activities.

When I read this story, I was touched by the stance taken by the initiators of the group. I wondered out loud whether my fellow Nigerian youths would replicate this intervention in Nigeria. Like Kenya, our young men and women have been lured into becoming thugs by political figures. They have also experienced the violence and other forms of negativity associated with politics in Nigeria from council election all the way to the presidential election. This evening, I am sharing this story of Kenya with hope that one youth will cease this moment to replicate the grassroot kenyan youth peace movement that enabled young people like you my listener to reject thuggery and all forms of violence during election. We have been crying about how elections are rigged and how thugs are used to hurt opponents and even innocent civilians. My beloved listener, I want you to say no to violence and say yes to peace. For the forthcoming elections, I want you to reject thuggery and violence. Do not sell your freedom to vote your preferred candidate to money. Do not sell your ability to be a positive influence in the life of other young men and women to money. Money does not guarantee happiness. It is a means to an end that must be treated as such. Do not worship money or power. Take a stand for peace today and encourage your friends to do the same.

If you have already found yourself engaged in thuggery, my dear, I ask you to sit still, reflect on the outcome of your behaviour and make the decision to become a peace agent instead of a violent political agent. Be the youth who will be remembered for changing the way politics is played in your family, village, council, LGA, state and our country, Nigeria. We need a peaceful platform to achieve the development we desire. Something in me tells me that if we remove thuggery and violence, our leaders might be able to channel personal security money to essential development projects. I also have the feeling that if young men and women like you decide to boycott political thuggery and violence, you would be a great example to the adults who are struggling to become the political leaders. Who knows, we might begin to have free and fair elections. We can elect people with the type of conscience that will enable our nation to become a youth friendly nation in terms of provision of good education, employment opportunities and other basic life opportunities.

My dear listener, what I am asking you to do today is to become the Brian of Nigeria and begin a ~~grassroot~~grassroots mobilization of youths against political thugery and other forms of violence. Go to the churches, market squares and village gatherings and speak to the hearts of your fellow youths. Do something for peace. Remember, blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons and daughters of God.

I am available to assist you with advice as you embark on your "Say no to violence" and Say yes to peace agenda. I wish you Gods blessings as I continue to pray: let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Fraternity: The foundation and Pathway to Peace

Good evening dear listener. We pray today for the grace to cooperate with the Holy Spirit so that we can fulfill our ~~ehristian~~Christian duties. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will join the Holy ~~father~~Father, Pope Francis to echo that there are no part-time Christians; faith is a full-time job. I begin with the message of Pope Francis

Vatican City, Jul 31, 2013 / 09:51 am (~~CNA/EWTN News~~).- Pope Francis' message for the Jan. 1, 2014 World Day of Peace is that living a life of fraternity can lead to peace for a world struggling with many tragedies.

"In the face of the many tragedies that afflict the family of nations – poverty, hunger, underdevelopment, conflicts, migrations, pollution, inequalities, injustice, organized crime, fundamentalisms – fraternity is the foundation and the pathway to peace," says a July 31 Vatican announcement on the theme for the 47th World Day of Peace.

The choice of "Fraternity, the foundation and pathway to peace" as the theme for his first Day of Peace echoes the message of solidarity that Pope Francis has already made a hallmark of his papacy.

"Fraternity," says the ~~ecommuniqué~~communiqué "is a dowry that every man and every woman brings with himself or herself as a human being, as a child of the one Father."

The Vatican statement also underscores that in modern society the predominant "culture of personal well-being" leads to "a loss of the sense of responsibility and fraternal relationship."

"Others, rather than being 'like us,' appear more as antagonists or enemies and are often treated as objects. Not uncommonly, the poor and needy are regarded as a 'burden,' a hindrance to development. At most, they are considered as recipients of aid or compassionate assistance," it says.

The announcement also underscores how living a life based in fraternity is "a gift and task that comes from God the Father."

It "urges us to be in solidarity against inequality and poverty that undermine the social fabric, to take care of every person, especially the weakest and most defenseless, to love him or her as oneself, with the very heart of Jesus Christ."

"In a world that is constantly growing more interdependent," the statement notes, "the good of fraternity is one that we cannot do without."

"It serves to defeat the spread of the globalization of indifference to which Pope Francis has frequently referred."

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Instead, the communiqué emphasizes that the Holy Father is calling for a “globalization of fraternity” which leaves its mark on “every aspect of life, including the economy, finance, civil society, politics, research, development, public and cultural institutions.”

As always my dear listener I wish to conclude by praying, let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me. On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Part-Time Christianity: A Major Pitfall

Good evening dear listener. We pray today for the grace to cooperate with the Holy Spirit so that we can fulfill our christian duties. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will join the Holy ~~father~~Father, Pope Francis to echo that there are no part-time Christians; faith is a full-time job. I begin with the message of Pope Francis

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Christians can't put their faith on a part-time schedule or rely on it just for the moments they choose; being Christian is a full-time occupation.

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If people don't open their hearts to the Holy Spirit to let God purify and enlighten them, then "our being Christian will be superficial," Knowing and doing what God wants is not possible with mere human effort -- it takes the transformative action of the Holy Spirit.

The modern world is skeptical about the truth and preferring ~~relativism~~, which holds that nothing is definite and that truth is based on consensus or personal whims. But Jesus is the truth that "came among us so that we could know it," he said. "The truth isn't seized like a thing, the truth is met. It's not a possession, it's an encounter with a person" in Christ.

The Holy Spirit was the Risen Christ's gift to humanity so that they could know and recognize that Jesus is the Word of truth. Through the Holy Spirit, God's word and law are "inscribed in our heart and become the principle in us for evaluating our choices and guide for our daily actions, becoming a principle of life.

If people open themselves up to the Holy Spirit, he is the one who transforms that heart and makes it new, "giving us the intelligence of the things of God. This intelligence "can't be reached with our own efforts. "If God doesn't enlighten us within, our being Christian will be superficial."

We must pray every day to the Holy Spirit so that he opens our heart to Jesus." In this year of faith, -we must take concrete steps to know Christ better, especially during the Year of Faith, by reading sacred Scripture, studying the catechism and taking part in the Sacraments.

"Let's ask ourselves what steps we are taking so that the faith guides our existence" because "there are no part-time Christians, at certain moments, in certain circumstances, in certain choices. "We can't be part-time Christian. We must be Christians at all times, completely." We must pray to the Holy Spirit everyday for guidance.

Now let us examine what it means to work part-time.

A **part-time job** is a form of **employment** that carries fewer hours per week than a **full-time job**. Workers are considered to be part-time if they commonly work fewer than 30 or 35 hours per week. ^[1] There are many reasons for working part-time, including the desire to do so, having one's hours cut back by an employer and being unable to find a full-time job. In some cases the nature of the work itself may require that the employees be classified part as part-time workers. For example, some **amusement parks** are closed during winter months and keep only a **skeleton crew** on hand for maintenance and office work. As a result of this cutback in staffing during the off season employees who operate rides, run gaming stands, or staff concession stands may be classified as part-time workers owing to the months long down time during which they may be technically employed but unable to work.

Full-time employment is employment in which a person works a minimum number of hours defined as such by his/her employer. Full-time employment often comes with **benefits** that are not typically offered to **part-time**, **temporary**, or **flexible** workers, such as **annual leave**, **sickleave**, and **health insurance**. Full-time jobs are often considered **careers**. They generally pay more than **part-time** jobs, and usually carry more hours per week.

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) does not define full-time employment or part-time employment. This is a matter generally to be determined by the employer. The definition by employer can vary and is generally published in a company's Employee Handbook.

From the definition of full-time, we discover that full-time is determined by the employer. For ~~christians~~ **Christians**, our full-time status is determined by Christians' mandates --- pray without ceasing (1 Thess 5.17), love God and your **neighbour** ~~neighbour~~ and so on. At no point in time did Jesus tell his followers to engage in part-time. Speaking on love of God, we learn from

Mark 12:30-31 "*And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.*' The second is this: *You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*' There is no other commandment greater than these."

~~and~~ **And**

John 13:34-35 "*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.*"

When the Jews wondered why Jesus healed the cured the sick man on a Sabbath, Jesus responded in **John 5:17** "My father still goes on working and I am at work too." Other Bible verses speaking to our full-time Christian duties are

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1 Corinthians 15:58 “
Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”

Colossians 3:23 “
Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as if working for the Lord, not for human masters.”

Hebrews 6:10 “
God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them.”

1 Timothy 4:10 “
That is why we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all people, and especially of those who believe.”

My dear listener, you can see that being Christian is a full-time job. It is not a job you do because when you desire to do so and do not do when you feel like it. Therefore, whether you are in the Church, at home, at work or other gatherings, once a Christian, you are obliged to live out your Christian duties. In sickness or in health, in good times and in bad times, in riches or poverty, you must still be a Christian.

We cannot be Christians and at the same be cheating people in varied ways at home, work and other places. Our lives must ring true to our vocations as Christians. When you are at home, at work and other places you would need to display the qualities of a Christian noted in 2 Peter 1 5-7 support your faith with goodness, goodness with understanding, understanding with self-control, self-control with perseverance, perseverance with devotion, devotion with kindness to the brothers and sisters and kindness to the brothers and sisters with love.

Let us avoid allowing quest for quick healing, riches, prophecy, and power to misguide us into being part-time Christians. "Injustice, excessive economic or social inequalities, envy, distrust, and pride raging among men, women and nations constantly threaten peace and cause wars. Everything done to overcome these disorders contributes to building up peace and avoiding war" (CCH). Peace cannot be attained on earth without safeguarding the goods of persons, free communication among men, respect for the dignity of persons and peoples, and the assiduous practice of fraternity. If we want peace, we must uphold justice. Christians uphold justice. They are humble, charitable, loving, [respectful](#) and [respectful](#) of other [people](#) ~~people's~~, ~~their~~ rights and properties. They are moderate in their quest for economic and social status and they trust God. We must be full-time Christians at all times living out the characteristics of Christians.

Remember the injunction of the Lord in the book of Revelation 3.16 Since you are neither hot nor cold, but only lukewarm, I will spit you out of my mouth. We must maintain our full-time status at all times as Jesus did. Remember that our father in heaven cares for us and our wellbeing. Let us strive to remain true soldiers of Christ at all time and have peace in our lives. Let us pray for the Holy Spirit to assist us in our mission as Christians

As always my dear listener I wish to conclude by praying, let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

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On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

Overcoming Low Self-Esteem

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the strength we need to overcome fears in our lives and approach our daily tasks with a winning attitude. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will present my thoughts about self-esteem to you.

Self-esteem is an affectively charged component of the self, consisting of a person's positive and negative self-evaluations. Some individuals have higher self-esteem than others and this attribute can have a profound impact on the way they think and feel about themselves. Having adequate self-esteem enables us to achieve good results and live happy lives. The feeling of self-worth is a state of mind that varies in response to success, failure, ~~changes and changes~~ in fortune, social interactions, and other life experiences. People who have an unstable, fluctuating self-esteem react more strongly to positive and negative events than do people whose sense of self-worth is stable and secure.

Everyone on the planet earth has a need for self-esteem, as we all want to see ourselves in a positive light. Human beings are inherently social animals, and the need for self-esteem is driven by this more primitive need to connect with others and gain their approval. Our self-esteem is a measure of our perception of how we are doing in the eyes of others. People are motivated to see themselves as valuable members of society as a way of coping with the deeply-rooted fear of death that privately haunts us all. Satisfying the need for self-esteem is critical to our entire outlook on life.

Our sense of self-image affects our self-esteem. People with positive self-images tend to be happy, healthy, productive and successful. They tend to persist longer at difficult tasks, sleep better at night and have fewer ulcers. They are more accepting of others and less likely to conform to peer pressure. Self-esteem tends to rise when we experience success or praise. A person who is competent and effective and who is loved, admired and respected by others will almost always have high self-esteem (Baumeister et al., 2003). People who have a low self-esteem typically also suffer from poor self-knowledge. Their self-concepts are inconsistent, inaccurate and confused.

The rough outlines of your self-concept could be revealed by this request: "please tell us about yourself". In other words, your self-concept consists of all your ideas, perceptions and feelings about who you are. It is the mental "picture" you have of your own personality. We creatively build our self-concepts out of daily experiences. Then we slowly revise them as we have new experiences. Once a stable self-concept exists, it tends to guide what we pay attention to, remember, and think about. Self-concept can greatly affect our behaviour and personal adjustment, especially when it is inaccurate. For example, Grace is a new mother who thinks that she is stupid, worthless and a failure, despite the positive evaluation she gets from her husband. With such an inaccurate self-concept, she tends to be depressed regardless of how well she does.

Our self-esteem is determined by the match between how we see ourselves and how we want to see ourselves, for example, perceiving oneself currently as a disorganized student but desiring to become a competent student. To the extent that you fall short of your standards, you will have

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lowered self-esteem, negative emotion, and in extreme cases a serious affective disorder. The specific impact depends on which standard you fail to achieve. A discrepancy between the actual and ought of the self may result in feelings of guilt, shame and resentment; excessive fears and anxiety-related disorders. A mismatch between the actual and ideal self may lead to feeling disappointed, frustrated, sad and unfulfilled, and in extreme cases, depression. Note that it is clear that ~~everyone~~every one of us must cope with some degree of self-discrepancy. Nobody is perfect. Yet we do not all suffer from emotional consequences. The reason is that self-esteem depends on two factors; the amount of discrepancy and the extent to which we focus on the discrepancies. The more focused we are, the greater the harm.

Adequate self-esteem is an important factor for doing well on tasks. For example, if a person has adequate self-esteem, which implies that they have confidence in their ability to do well in life, the person would be more likely to exert effort to ensure that they do well.

People who are high in self-esteem are confident and bring to new challenges a winning and motivating attitude. Adequate self-esteem capacitates us to achieve good results and live happy lives. Individuals who have high self-esteem tend to display stable social, emotional, physical and mental health. In the home, work or school environment they do well.

In contrast, people who have low self-esteem lack confidence and bring to any new task a losing attitude that traps them in a vicious, self-defeating cycle. Expecting to fail, and fearing the worst, they become anxious, exert less effort, and “tune out” on important challenges. Then when they do fail, people with low self-esteem often blame themselves, which makes them feel less competent. Low self-esteem triggers a self-defeating cycle in which negative expectations impair performance, which, in turn, reinforces low self-esteem. Studies indicate that people who have low self-esteem tend to have problems in learning, social, emotional, physical and mental health. They display behavioural problems in the work place, school and at home and sometimes tend to be absent from work or school frequently.

Overcoming low self-esteem

Fear appears to be the underlying factor in lack of self-confidence or low self-esteem. The cycle is then sustained by lack of action or engagement in self-handicapping actions. To counter fear, a person who lacks self-confidence must face the fear – actually do the thing one fears. The truth is that most people experience fear but every effort made towards doing the feared activity makes it less fearful. Eleanor Roosevelt has this to say: *“you gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, I have lived through the horror. I can take the next thing that comes along. You must do the thing you think you cannot do.”* Instead of staying fearful, develop curiosity, openness and enthusiasm towards the things and people around you. Face your irrational thoughts or interpretations (e.g., seeing negative outcome in most things). When you have something to do, try doing it no matter how anxious, fearful or pleasant the process may feel. The accomplishments you achieve build self-confidence and self-esteem. You don’t know what you are capable of doing until you try. Most people don’t make attempts because they think that they must feel calm or courageous before undertaking an activity. This is a fallacy because it actually works the other way round. You become courageous after you have accomplished a target task.

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An essential element of self-confidence is preparation. When you have little or no knowledge about the task to be accomplished, you must ask questions, do research to learn about it. If you have an examination, you must study. If you have a presentation, you must write, rewrite and rehearse it as many times as needed to feel comfortable with your topic. If you are going to read at Church, you must practice well. If need be, add breathing and calming exercises before you proceed to engage in a challenging task. When you fail to prepare, you are engaging in self-handicapping behaviour. Making mistakes or failing to achieve desired outcome does not kill. See mistakes and failures as learning experiences rather than horrible ones. At least, your mistake will teach you not to use the wrong technique again. Each time you make a mistake or fail, you become desensitized to failure so that it will cease to have an adverse impact on you and you can become more determined to achieve.

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Self-awareness is an essential component of self-confidence. Enhancing your self-confidence requires knowing yourself, and what you want to get out of life. Knowing yourself, your strengths and weaknesses, will enable you to pay less attention to the judgment of others so that they will not undermine your self-confidence.

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Self-esteem is a component of the self consisting of both positive and negative evaluations. Self-confidence denotes our belief in our capacity to achieve target goals. To enhance our self-esteem and self-confidence, we need the following: understanding personal strengths and weaknesses; accepting both the strengths and weaknesses; being aware of one's feelings and thoughts from moment to moment; developing a realistic view of self, others and the world, using cognitive and behavioural approaches, including self-talk; facing your fear, engaging in action; preparation; accepting mistakes and failures; avoiding self-handicapping behaviour and seeking psychological help as needed. With practice, our feared experiences fade away and we become more competent and self-confident. Eventually, as we embrace life with confidence, we allow ourselves to reach our optimal potential as described by Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers.

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I believe that when we have adequate self-esteem, we cease to envy others their successes and focus more on putting forth effort to optimize our capacity to achieve target goals. I also believe that we would feel at peace with ourselves and God who made us in his own image and likeness. Today, I encourage you my listener to work on your self-esteem and accept the blessings God has bestowed on you and stay peaceful. I continue to pray: Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

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On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh, and the studio manager, _____, I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Tune in again next week at the same time for another edition of the programme, [peace](#).

How Families can Manage Physical and Verbal Violence Tendencies

Good evening dear listener. Today we pray for all the families that are experiencing crisis that our good God will inspire them to find new ways to overcome their challenges.

In this edition of the programme, peace, I will discuss some ways families can manage physical and verbal violence tendencies.

Last Saturday, many individuals called me to express that their families are experiencing the issues I discussed. I received invitation to visit the families. One of my callers informed me that many families are living in violence, particularly, the verbal violence I spoke about last week. I asked my caller what I can do to help and he requested that I do an intervention for his family. Over the course of the week, I received more request for interventions. Now, I have reflected on the enormous challenge and have decided that I will work on hosting family sessions in parishes and local communities so that I can work with many families and hopefully assist them with finding peaceful alternatives to violence in their homes.

Therefore, I am dedicating today's programme to the families that are at rancor with each other. First, I would like to address husbands and wives. Dear husbands and wives, have you seen a perfect human being in your life? Do you know that you are an imperfect man, woman in union with another imperfect man or woman? I believe you know this. If not please note today that no human being on earth is perfect. This means that we all have our respective challenges in life. We struggle with a variety of issues but the grace of God, which according to St. Paul is sufficient comes to our aid in all circumstances.

I believe that if we pray and work for it, peace will make its dwelling with us. The Secretary to United Nations made this statement during the 2013 World Day of Peace Celebration. He said: We are all summoned to work for the broader cause of human development to which people everywhere are entitled, and to build the peace in which all people and societies can prosper. Let us not forget that peace does not occur by happenstance, it is the product of the conscious and consistent effort of people of good will acting together for the common good. And let us remember that peace that is secured by hard work, dedication and commitment is a peace that is lasting and sustainable and very much needed in this world of ours.

The above statement implies that peace does not occur without effort from people. Peace requires active participation of all the players. In the family, following peaceful strategies require the effort of every member of the family.

The institution of peace in our individual lives, families, communities, schools, towns, religion, states and nation calls for education on the contributing factors that inhibit peace and breed violence, and those that facilitates peace. We must be aware of our psychological tendencies and how to curb or control our behaviour regardless of our emotion at any given time or circumstance. We need to actively deconstruct hurtful habits or behaviours we have learned from experiences and the cognitive schemas that set us up for violent actions. Just as we learn faulty attitudes, we can learn good ones. We have the opportunity to decide to focus on our vulnerabilities and retain disfunctional behaviours or make the necessary adjustment to surmount the negative experiences we have had in the past and enshrine peace in our lives. Cognitive-

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behavioural psychologists can help people to find their pathway to peace. No case can be considered hopeless as long as there is still opportunity to learn new behaviour.

I encourage you husband, I encourage you wife to take some time this evening to reflect on who you are, what you think about other people - your wife, husband, children and others, what you think about your world and gain understanding of your worldview. Are you a person who believe that this world is a hostile war-laden environment that requires both verbal and physical fight for survival? Are you a person who expects others to show you respect, difference and love at all times without reciprocal effort from you? Do you expect that everyone you encounter must love you before you feel loved? Are you afraid of trusting your wife, husband, children, friends and others? If this is you, you need to understand that you have a psychological vulnerability that disposes you to violent tendencies and you would need to make effort to deconstruct these beliefs which inhibit you from welcoming peace in your home.

First, you would need to recourse to prayer seeking the light of the Holy Spirit to enlighten you about your personality and how you contribute to the violence (physical or verbal) in your home. Do not be afraid of looking inward and finding the you inside. If you ask for it, the grace of God will assist you and enable you to refocus and begin to work on some of the beliefs that propel you to violent behavior.

If you consider yourself a peaceful person and feel that others around you are violent, I encourage you to engage in additional reflection focusing on how you can continue to be the angel of peace in your home.... Remember that earthly peace is the image and fruit of the peace of Christ, the messianic "Prince of Peace" (Is. 9:5). By the blood of his cross, "in his own person he killed the hostility," (Eph 2:16) he reconciled humans with God and made his Church the sacrament of the unity of the human race and of its union with God. "He is our peace." He has declared: "Blessed are the peacemakers" (Mt. 5:9).

When you are exemplifying peace despite the challenges in your home, you are being Christ in your home and you shall be blessed indeed. In the face of challenges of violence everywhere, choose dialogue instead of verbal or physical combat. When you quarrel with your husband or wife, find the room in your heart to let go of the hurt you might be feeling as soon as possible. Be reconciled and let your children and those who live among you find expressions of your faith in the way you interact with your husband and wife even in the midst of challenges. I want you to remember that when you are unable to reconcile and you choose to stay in bitterness that you suffer the pain of bitterness. To liberate yourself and find inner peace, you must reach out to the person towards whom you feel bitterness for reconciliation. When you find it difficult, look at Christ in your heart and notice that he had room to forgive and accommodate those who plotted and handed him over to be killed, those who denied him, those who insulted him and those that crucified him. Is there any hurt that our Jesus did not experience on earth for our sake? Think about it when you say out loud or to yourself "I will never forgive him." "I will never forgive her." *Ihe omerem enweghim ike igbaghara ya.* My dear listener I want to remind you again today that when we make these types of statement in words or deeds, we are indeed condemning ourselves ----- forgive us our sins as we forgive those who offend us ---- you see when I am holding someone ransom to unforgiveness, I am also holding myself. Therefore, for me to stay connected with my God, I must forgive others all the time whether they apologize or not for their offenses.

Now, my listener, if you are a husband and you are not happy with your wife, how does it feel coming home after a day's work? If you are a wife, how does it feel returning home from work or waiting at home to receive your husband? Do you know that you can change the cause of your difficult relationship by choosing to have empathy and strive towards peaceful resolution of all your challenges in the home? Yes my dear I believe you can do this. I am asking you this evening to choose to develop empathy towards your wife, husband and others. Empathy allows us to key in to the feelings of others and reappraise our position based on our knowledge. I have a feeling that if every husband and wife knows how painful it is to live in bitterness or agony, every husband and wife will give everything to have peace in their homes.

Do all in your power to begin to unlearn the impact of the assertion that conflict or violence is necessary for survival. I want you to know that peace is actually what we need for survival of the human race. Conflict and violence could make us extinct therefore, if you want peace, work for it. Forget African Magic, life is not as you see it on the screen. Life is more complex than that screen you watch from day-to-day. Turn off African Magic and reflect on your real life with your husband and wife and recapture the love that brought you together in the first place. As you are listening to me this night, I want you to turn to your husband or wife and ask him or her to join you as you work towards peace. Please share the look and words of love this evening. Feel the love of God in your heart and let it radiate in your family. It is not too late to recreate love and peace in your family. Taa bu gbo. I believe in you my dear listener. I know you have the capacity to turn away from violent ways and live peace. I treasure and love you for your hardwork and dedication to peace. May the peace and love of God be with you. Amen! Please join me in saying: Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer Fidelis Onoh, the studio Manager _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you a peaceful night rest. Tune in again same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

The Role of Teachers in Building the Self-Esteem of the Learners.

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for teachers that they may demonstrate love for their profession and promote good tenets of education. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will discuss the role of teachers in building the self-esteem of the learners.

Self-esteem is an important factor in learning. The self-esteem of a learner assists or impedes learning. For example, if learners have adequate self-esteem, which implies that they have confidence in their ability to learn school material well and consequently earn good grades, they may be more likely to exert more effort in studies. Self-esteem among learners is affected by the evaluations they receive from their peers, teachers and parents. Within the academic environment, teachers' perception and appraisals of the learners affect their self-esteem and performance. Predominately positive evaluations tend to boost students' self-esteem and achievement whereas evaluations that are more negative tend to reduce students' belief in their capacity to attain optimal achievement and consequently lead to poor academic achievement. According to the concept of self-fulfilling prophecy (Loomans & Loomans, 1994), learners tend to achieve results that are consistent with their teacher's expectations and treatment.

My dear listener, you, the teachers can support learners' development of adequate self-esteem. The first approach to assisting students in this regard is demonstrating your own belief in your capacity to achieve desired goals and helping learners to understand that fears and mistakes are part of the learning process. Help learners to feel confident in themselves, explore their world, and take risks even when they are feeling afraid. The following are recommended for enhancing the self-esteem of learners:

Teacher's acceptance of self

Teachers are encouraged to model positive behaviour to students. They are to show examples of appropriate ways of responding to successes and difficulties in the classroom. Albert Bandura, a social-behaviourist, has demonstrated that children learn from watching other people. Teachers need to remember that they may be the major influence in a learner's life and must model positive attitude to successes and failures to the learners.

Accepting students

Each learner is unique, having a specific socio-economic, cultural and religious background. Learners also have the capacity to experience different feelings that may not be consistent with the teacher's expectation from moment to moment. Teachers must endeavour to accept learners with a variety of backgrounds, behaviours and expectations. It is most appropriate to demonstrate the humanistic psychology perspective that suggests that unconditional love should be given to all. Let the learners know that you accept and love them even when you critique or administer consequences for inappropriate behaviour.

Structuring classroom physical and emotional space

Teachers should consider setting classroom expectations, providing well-defined goals and boundaries of teacher-learner relationship. The classroom should be set-up to encourage positive

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relationships among the learners and the teacher.

Respecting learners

Teachers need to have the understanding that students are valued members of the educational setting and respect them. Teachers only exist because of learners and therefore learners need to know that they are valued and respected.

Listening with understanding

Learners, especially young people, often like to report matters to their teachers. Sometimes, they may be over-critical of their performance. Teachers should make it a point of duty to listen and show that they understand the students' point of view and, at the same time, guide them appropriately to achieve optimal results.

Preparing all learners for success

In the classroom, all learners should be treated equally to attain success. Teachers can damage the motivation of some of their students by calling them names or displaying behaviour that suggests that they are not expecting these students to be successful. Teachers must make effort to carry all learners and walk them towards the promised land of academic success.

Promoting learner's competence

It has already been stated that self-esteem capacitates learners' achievement. When learners achieve set goals and objectives, they feel good about themselves and are more likely to take on new tasks. Teachers need to make effort to provide challenging, meaningful and achievable activities to the learners.

Providing constructive criticisms, feedback and reinforcement

Evaluations are important parts of learning. It is through evaluation that learners' competence are ascertained and consolidated. Teachers should remember that constructive criticisms would help learners to develop. When learners achieve their goals, they should earn rewards (e.g. good grades and positive feedback). When they underperform, they should also earn the consequence that is commensurate with their level of performance and be encouraged to do better in subsequent activities.

You will be wondering why I am discussing self-esteem today? I have discovered that learners with adequate self-esteem tend to be more academically and socially balanced. They don't engage in put down behaviours rather, they are focused on achievement of their target goals. Self-esteem is an important component of learning. In the academic setting, setting clear expectations, showing respect for the learner, ensuring parents' participation in the academic life of the learners, empowering the learners, modeling positive behaviour and encouraging learners to develop positive thinking and belief in their capacity to do well in school is necessary for enhancing self-esteem. You the teacher must avoid labeling students with disabling terms that compromise their self-esteem. And instead do everything in your power to encourage them to develop adequate self-esteem. Teachers should also endeavour to work on their own self-esteem because they can only exemplify this needed component of success if they themselves have adequate self-esteem.

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I have this belief that learners who have adequate self-esteem would be assertive. They would not be pushovers or individuals or individuals who will forget the basic tenet of life. It would be difficult to brainwash or manipulate them into tooting or ~~militanting~~militating or joining terrorist organization. They don't need group think or group power to feel good about themselves. Teachers must remember this and help the learners to develop adequate self-esteem. If the learners feel confident in their own ability to accomplish tasks, they will evidence responsible behaviour.

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Our society is counting on you the teacher to produce responsible citizens. I have no doubt in my mind about your capacity to deliver. I hope that my discussion today will enable you to think about innovative ways to raise today's learner who is our emerging leader. Teach and model adaptive behaviour to them. Let them know that as they are counting on us today, we are counting on them for the future. And if they are to continue inhabiting the earth, they must work to eliminate violence and promote peace. Peace will guarantee their future. I hope that you the teacher will understand this special tasks of raising our future leaders and take it seriously. Let us help learners to believe in their capacity to achieve lofty goals in life. If we succeed in doing this, we can go to sleep with our two eyes closed because the future will be in the hands of focused individuals. We can be assured that posterity will remember us for guiding them to good choices.

May the peace of God be with you as you take on the task of raising enterprising young men and women. Remember that you can send you peace story to me for inclusion in this programme, peace. Call me at 0806 561 3687 or visit me at Godfrey Okoye University Enugu. Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Speaking out for Our Girls, Education and Our Nation

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the grace to become responsible leaders who will teach and model the principles and values of life that support peaceful lifestyle. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will discuss our education in the light of the Boko Haram challenge and the abduction of our girls. I title it SPEAKING OUT FOR OUR GIRLS, EDUCATION AND OUR NATION.

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A week ago, as I was driving to my work place, GO University, I kept reflecting on what educational institutions (Ministry of Education, primary schools, secondary schools, colleges of education, polytechnics, universities, etc.) are doing in response to the Boko Haram insurgency and especially the abduction of our girls. I wondered why we are not in the fore-front of engaging in interventions to ameliorate the impact of Boko Haram in Nigeria. When I learned that the founder of Boko Haram, Yusuf, had a university degree, I felt deep pain and wondered about the type of education he received. I recalled my Vice Chancellor's preferred definition of education that says Education is a system which makes human beings out of animals; I began to question myself as to whether the education we give here in our country, Nigeria, is capable of producing this result. Can we honestly say that we teach our students in a manner that helps them to develop positive principles of life? Can we say that we model and teach academic and moral values to our students? If young people come to us with animalistic behaviours, are we capable of forming them into human beings? These are difficult questions all educational institutions must answer in this time of great violent challenges in our country. We must engage in deep reflection about these issues, tell ourselves the truth, generate ways of solving the problems we have in our universities, colleges, secondary schools, primary schools and nursery schools and implement the solutions.

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We must urgently join the effort for eradicating violence in our country. We must speak for peace and teach peace. We must think about our girls who were abducted from their school. We must know that Boko Haram is a threat to education and do something about it. We cannot fold our hands like unconcerned citizens. The abduction of our girls is the climax of Boko Haram's violence towards education and we must do something positive to help the Boko Haram members know that education is an essential part of our life that makes us to better understand God (Allah) and relate with the people God created in a loving humane way.

When I viewed and had the statement of the Boko Haram leader, I couldn't help feeling empathy for them as I saw a lack of understanding of the religion, Islam. I saw people who have been brainwashed into a way of life that is a threat to their own very existence. I saw people who do not know how to put their skills to good use. I saw people who would rather kill than heal - ~~people~~ ~~people~~ who don't know what to do with their lives. I saw people who have developed addiction to violence - stealing, torturing, killing and burning down houses. I saw people who looked like animals. I saw a complete lack of education and reasoning.

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Having gone through a thicket of feelings, I began to shake because I know that animals don't know how to treat species that are different from theirs. I shake because girls - vulnerable young women are in the hands of men who appear barbaric and malicious. I shake because the girls are

outnumbered by these men.

I condemn this violence. I condemn this act of abducting our girls and boldly claiming responsibility for the job and threatening to sell them off as slaves. This is the greatest height of inhumanity. I condemn this way of life that makes supposedly human persons to act like animals. This level of ignorance is a great danger to the entire human race. May God save us! Good education can help us to surmount these types of challenges in our country.

I encourage all our educational institutions to take actions that says No to Boko Haram. Let us say No to this dehumanization. Let us rise up to our educational mandate and collaboratively work for the return of our girls and the glory/fruits (excellence in character and learning) of education in our country.

In engaging the Boko Haram challenge, we must not allow the Boko Haram group to mislead us. We must ensure that we do not perceive the Islamic religion in Nigeria as a terrorist group. We must continue to distinguish between the religion itself and fundamentalist or radical groups. Christians might consider partnering with progressive Islamic scholars for the purpose of espousing the positive tenets of the religion that are consistent with the realities of life and exposing the actions and ideas that do not support peace and prosperity of our nation. Let all educational institutions rise up and join hands in bringing our girls back.

I cry out to the Heavens for support on this and beg God to visit this Boko Haram group the way he visited Saul and transformed him to Paul, his instrument of evangelization. I pray that God will visit each of these people and transform them all. For our girls, I pray that God will protect them and bring them back to us. For ourselves, I pray that we may be emboldened to stand up for education and for the return of our abducted girls, daughters and sisters. May God help us in this ~~endeavor~~endeavour. May this challenge lead us to the knowledge of the importance of a culture of peace. May we remember that we must teach in a way that will produce desired values and principles in the learners. These values and principles must include respect for other people, culture, religion, language and generation and most importantly the value of peace.

My dear listener, if you are in any way involved in the teaching profession, make it your quest and aim to teach and model peace. Make sure you avoid all forms of examination irregularities and malpractices that give our young ones the message that they can acquire educational certificate without learning. Our young ones must know that education is supposed to transform them into human beings. Education builds both the moral and intellectual capacity of the learner. And if you the educationist understand ~~this dual purposes~~these dual purposes of education, and actually endeavour to incorporate them appropriately, I believe that we will be producing young men and women who we can proudly call the educated. Young men and women who will be focused on the improvement of our world. Young men and women who will respect all persons regardless of age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture, language or generation. Young men and women who will understand that violence is a threat to human existence and progress. Young men and women who will embrace peace, enshrining principles of justice, equality and respect.

I pray and hope that you and I will begin to see the function of education - that is transforming us from animals into human beings. I pray and hope that you and I will join hands together and work towards ensuring that education achieves its goals. Let us stand up for education by getting our teaching job done well. Let us stand up for the release of our girls by praying and taking

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actions that support education and peace. Let us stand up for our nation by teaching and modeling peace and doing all we can to support our country, Nigeria.

May the peace of God be with you as you reflect on your role in speaking out for education, for our girls and for our nation and taking action to accomplish your role responsibly. Feel free to share your thoughts about this edition of the program, peace and other stories of peace with me by phone 0806 561 3687 or visiting me at Godfrey Okoye University Enugu. Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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The Roles of Christian Parents

Good evening dear listener. We pray today for parents who have a lot to do in the value to create a harmonious and peaceful home. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will discuss an excerpt taken from a presentation I made to the Laity council on the roles of Christian parents.

The family (nuclear), the building block of society, consists of parents and children. The nuclear family thus defined is embedded in the extended family of aunts, uncles, cousins, in-laws, grandparents, etc. Nevertheless, it is in this core family of parents and children that the most crucial development generally takes place. It is within the family that generations of people are nurtured and trained to continue the work of God on earth. The family is perceived as the cradle of faith - our spiritual and religious growth is planted, watered and nourished in the family. Both parents and children have roles to perform in the family. We shall focus on the roles of parents which cut across the components of overall well-being (health) which are the physical, spiritual, psychological, social and intellectual dimensions.

My dear listener the parents you have a significant role in the physical development of the children in your family. You are expected to provide basic life necessities for your children. These basic necessities include food, water, clothes and accommodation. According to Abraham Maslow, a humanistic psychologist, in the hierarchy of motives the basic necessities must be met in order to move to higher orders and get to the self-actualization point. Although there are arguments among scholars regarding the order of the motives, the basic needs are considered important stepping stones to development. No woman and man should bring children into this world and leave them to starve, unclothed and without a home. It is important for married couples to think about and have plans for providing for the basic needs of children before having children.

Connected to the basic physical needs is the spiritual life of children. From birth to young adulthood, you have the responsibility of grooming your children to develop their spirituality. The issue of spirituality transcends religiosity in the sense that you, the parent can teach your children about God and the Christian faith but you cannot determine the spirituality of your children. Both religious attachment and spirituality are affected by the atmosphere in the family. If you do not shape the thinking and values of your children, someone else will do the task for you. You should model good Christian spirituality, such as caring, forgiveness, empathy, charity, calmness and other dispositions infused into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. If your family is infused with these attributes of spirituality, your children will grow up with balanced spirituality. In contrast, if the home is chaotic or confusing, no matter how religious you may be, your children may not develop a deep-rooted spiritual and religious life.

Another aspect of your role as a parent is the development of your children's psychological well-being. You have heard me talk about the importance of psychological health. It is as important as other areas of development. This is supported by the understanding that children's view of life affects how they perceive and interact with their world, starting from the family. You the mother must ensure that you have a secure attachment with your children and, during the first stage of life, nurture them in a way that would make them develop trust. According to Erick Erickson, the

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object of the first psychosocial stage of life is the development of trust or mistrust. Trust is developed when infants experience unfailing warmth, care and love from their primary caregivers. The primary caregiver could be the mother, father, grandparents, aunts, uncles or the house help. In my opinion, either you the mother or the father should play this very important role. It should not be left to the grandparents and nanny. A strong parent-child attachment is a necessary pre-requisite for becoming a secure adult instead.

You the young working couple, who are ready to bring children into the world must think about the implications of having children for your work life and make necessary adjustments to accommodate being available before having children. Apart from the first stage of psychosocial development, subsequent stages before adulthood require a continuing experience of love, care, empathy, understanding, etc. for an adequate psychological development. You must remember that the experiences of childhood follow people into adulthood. If you want your children to grow into loving and caring adults who have goodwill towards their families and the society, you must give them a sufficient dosage of these dispositions.

My lovely parent you would need to avoid creating an over-dependent attitude in your children. Effort should be geared towards helping the children to develop an independent mindset that would allow them to individuate from the family at the appropriate time. According to Erick Erickson, children learn to exercise will, to make choices, and to control themselves or they become uncertain and doubt that they can do things by themselves during their second year of life. This stage is called autonomy vs. shame/doubt. In order to give children the opportunity to develop autonomy, you should give them room to explore the world around them. This means that harmful things should be removed from the exploration surrounding and helpful toys, dolls and other items should be kept for children's play. From the third to fifth year, children develop initiative or guilt. That is, they learn to initiate activities and enjoy their accomplishments, acquiring direction and purpose. If they are not allowed to display initiative, they feel guilty for their attempts at independence.

Children develop a sense of industry and [curiosity](#) and are eager to learn or they feel inferior and lose interest in their tasks during the sixth through puberty years of their lives. You should ensure that you model industry (i.e., hard work, diligence and use of their talents) to your children so that they can learn how to put their skills and knowledge to good use for the benefit of their family and society. Please affirm the effort of your children in this direction and limit your disapproval of task-oriented behaviour.

You the parent play an equally significant role in the social development of your children. *Akwa asi na nne ewu n'ata ji, nwa ya esoro ya muta ita ji*. Children will learn how to get along with other people, how to be good citizens and contributing members of society by watching their parents. On no account should you, the well-meaning parents engage in fights, quarrels, malicious criticism of each other and malicious property-damaging behaviour in the family. When it is necessary to discipline your children, think about non-violent approaches such as time out before engaging in violent punishment. Discipline is important in training the child, but it must be done in the context of love (Prov 3:12, Heb: 12.6). If punishment must be given, be sure to explain to your children why you are punishing them. Avoid punishing them just to assert your authority.

You must make effort to give adequate attention to your children so that they need not engage in

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negative behaviour to attract attention. You are expected to reward the positive actions of your children in order to encourage them to engage in more pro-social behaviour. Please avoid calling your children unbecoming names like mumu, mugu, isokpu, ewu, onye iberibe, aturu etc. Such names are derogatory and, when children internalize them, they may act in ways that are consistent with what you call them. The consequences might include the development of an inferiority complex, which may spiral into all kinds of psychological and physical problems. The appropriate thing would be to call children by their name, whether they are behaving well or not. This will give them the impression that you care about them when they are being good and when they are engaging in negative behaviour. The children would also feel accepted as they are and therefore may be more likely to develop adequate self-esteem.

I encourage you to create an atmosphere of love, acceptance, openness, forgiveness, and honesty, - ensuring that every member of the family is important. Show similar sensitivity to both good and bad behaviour of your children. Children should be affirmed when they are doing well. If you only notice your children when they are not behaving well, the children might engage in more maladaptive behaviours just to get your attention. Encouraging statements should be used more often than discouraging or sarcastic statements. For each discouraging statement, at least four encouraging statement must be made to the child. And remember that you need to be open to admitting your mistakes to your children and asking them for forgiveness for these mistakes.

You mother and father must love each other, because a loving relationship between parents helps the children to feel more secure. When there are quarrels, disrespect and hate between you, the parents, the children feel threatened. They worry each day whether you are going to separate and what will become of them if that happens. Sometimes they blame themselves for the bitterness and hate you feel towards each other. Also, you the father should avoid undermining the authority of mother and the mother must avoid undermining the authority of the father. You should present a united front in matters of family discipline and related issues and guide your children. Do not let them play you against each other.

An important role that you must also play in the family is that of providing for your children's intellectual development through both informal and formal education. In our current millennium, education is a necessary pathway to development in varied spheres that have already been described above. Good education should guarantee both moral and academic excellence and parents should therefore send their children to schools that pay attention to these standards of education. It is expected that you would endeavour to pay your children's tuition on time and provide other school resources such as books, pens etc. that enhance their academic performance.

Responsibility for shaping the character and values of the children rests with you, the parents, who have to guide the physical, spiritual, psychological, social and intellectual growth of the children. To perform these roles well, you must get your priorities right. It must be God first, followed by family, career, fame and others. Unless you set your priorities right, you risk developing your family in a destructive manner. Some things that can help you in performing your roles well include living an authentic Christian life, setting limits and being firm and having family forums (meetings). It helps to avoid humiliating family members, pushing for perfection, withdrawing affection, comparing one child to another, nagging, and bribing children with unnecessary gifts.

When you set your priorities right and engage effectively in the raising of your children, you

must have faith in God's ability to fulfill his promise of being with his people and supporting them. You would need to be optimistic about the future of your children and pray for them without ceasing. When your home is harmonious, it would be easier to contemplate the loving mercy of God and the peacefulness of heaven. There will be peace flowing like a river in the home. If every member of the home is a peacemaker, you would feel that the sons and daughters of God live in the home - Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the sons and daughters of God. I encourage you my dear listener, the parents, to do your best to make you home a peaceful abode by playing your role in the home. May the God of heaven bless you with peace.

Remember that you can send you peace story to me for inclusion in this programme, peace. Call me at 0806 561 3687 or visit me at Godfrey Okoye University Enugu. Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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A Peaceful Me for a Peaceful World by Mr. Greg Ademu

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the grace to make peace our quest and aim and realize that a peaceful world needs a peaceful me. In this edition of the programme, peace, I begin with an essay on a peaceful me for a peaceful world submitted by Mr. Greg Ademu.

A report in May 2011 on the Global Peace Index highlighted that had the world been 25% more peaceful in the past year, the global economy would have benefited by an additional \$2 trillion, which would account for 2% of global GDP per annum required to mitigate global warming, cover all costs to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, cancel all public debt held by Greece, Ireland and Portugal, and cover the rebuilding costs for the 2011 Tokyo earthquake and tsunami.

Have you ever dreamed about a joyful world with peace and prosperity for all humankind – a world in which we respect and love each other despite the differences in our culture, religion and way of life?

I often feel challenged when I see the world in turmoil, a result of the differences between our ideals. This leads to grief and sorrow being inflicted on millions of innocent victims by a few who abuse the power of their convictions.

-What is "Peace"?
-To most people, "Peace" is simply the absence of war or the lack of violence or conflict and freedom from fear of violence. But I would like to remind you that "Peace" also involves the establishment of equality, justice, security, and prosperity, in matters of social and economic welfare that will serve the true interests of all.

-How do we make or create "Peace"?
-It simply begins with our own personal world. I believe that as individuals, it is easier to make just one person a bit happier. What this means is that while saving every soul in the world may not be possible, small acts in our daily lives have a way of multiplying so that the world changes one person at a time.

So, can a peaceful world be achieved? Yes!!! I believe it can be attained through the realization of five basic fundamental freedoms, for all people, everywhere in the world. They are:

- Freedom of Speech
- freedom of speech
- Freedom of religion

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—Freedom from want



—Freedom for the environment

—and



Freedom from fear

(Four of these Five Freedoms originated with U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt in his State of the Union address to the U.S. Congress in January 1941).

Of course, other rights are needed too, but these five fundamental freedoms establish a framework within which other rights can flourish.

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Please look at your hand for a moment. Hold it up, palm facing you. We all have five fingers, but the first we call a thumb. In appearance it looks different. It stands out. And it is strong. It represents freedom of speech, the idea that stands out, that stands up to dishonesty and corruption.

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Next, look at your index finger. We point with this one. It gives us direction. It represents freedom of religion. Each of us is free to choose our own direction, with or without God, and for those who decide that God is their guide, then they are free to have their own relationship with God without the state telling them what that relationship must be. Interference by the state pollutes the relationship with God.

Third is the middle finger, the longest of all. It represents freedom from want, the long road of existence, and the certainty that there will be food, water, shelter, education, and health care for every one of us no matter where we may be on that road. Next, for many of us, is the marriage ring finger, either the right or the left hand, and for all of us, a finger with a direct link to our nervous system. It represents freedom for the environment. Life. We all have a direct link to the Earth and the ecosystem of which we are a part. When the life of the Earth is spoiled, our lives are spoiled.

Finally, there is our "little finger," shorter and smaller than the rest. It represents freedom from fear. It's the "finale" of our hand, our reward. All the others lead to this one. As you take a look at your hand and recount the Five Freedoms, remember that you didn't ask for that hand, you were born with it. So too, you do not have to ask for the Five Freedoms, you were born with them. They are five freedoms for all!

The question today is whether we are ready to embrace these dimensions of freedom. We pray for freedom from anxiety - fear each day and yet most of us have allowed fear to cripple us.

Many of us exhibit an external locus of control, which is the tendency to attribute failures and weaknesses to such outside forces as voodoo, charms and witchcraft. For example, I taught my students the process of memory and its relationship to studying, retaining information and retrieving the information during tests and examinations. Instead of understanding the impact of the forgetting curve as posited by Hermann Ebbinghaus and appropriate methods of studying to enhance retention and retrieval, several of the students demonstrated that they believed that "wicked" people use voodoo to "zap" what they learn. They were apt to assure me that some people in their families, clans and villages were "evil" people. The sad part of this story is that attributing challenges like reading and remembering information to pass examinations to juju, witchcraft and their like take away responsibility from people and make them to become less

focused on positive things they can do to improve their life outcomes.

This external locus of control feeds our fear which leads to a lack of self confidence. The cycle is then sustained by a lack of action or engagement in self-handicapping actions. To counter fear, you must face the fear – actually do the thing you fear. The truth is that most people experience fear but every effort made towards doing the feared activity makes it less fearful. Eleanor Roosevelt said: *“you gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You are able to say to yourself, I have lived through the horror. I can take the next thing that comes along. You must do the thing you think you cannot do.”* Instead of staying fearful, develop curiosity, openness and enthusiasm towards the things and people around you. Face your irrational thoughts or interpretations (e.g., seeing negative outcome in most things). When you have something to do, try doing it no matter how anxious, fearful or unpleasant the process may feel. The accomplishments you achieve build self-confidence. You don’t know what you are capable of doing until you try. Most people don’t make attempts because they think that they must feel calm or courageous before undertaking an activity. This is a false because it actually works the other way round. You become courageous after you have accomplished a target task. Your ~~feelings of fear dissipates~~ feelings of fear dissipate with each attempt you make.

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What am I asking you to do today? My dear listener, I want you to embrace freedom from fear. Don't allow fear to cripple you rather be the master of your world. If you can deal with fear, I am sure that you can make the changes you desire. And the ultimate change I am encouraging you to make is to work towards peace, embrace peace and become an embodiment of peace. Remember the words of Mahatma Gandhi, we must become the change we want to see in the world. So a peaceful world requires a peaceful me and you. and therefore we must continue to say: Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

Feel free to share your stories of peace with me. My phone number is 0806 561 3687. On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Emotional Maturity

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the grace to develop emotional maturity. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will discuss emotional maturity as a means to attain peace.

The hallmarks of emotional maturity are self-control, zeal and persistence and the ability to motivate oneself. Emotional maturity is reflected in the ability to handle emotions of anger, insecurity, fear, grief, envy, jealousy, disappointment, frustration and others. The ability to identify one's emotion, allow self to experience them and resolve them from within depicts emotional maturity. On the other hand, persons who tend to get stuck with their emotions, lacking the capacity to resolve them and move on with their lives are emotionally immature.

You must be wondering why I am discussing emotional maturity and why it matters. In our relationship with one another, our level of emotional maturity is one of the factors that determine how we relate with one another. Emotional maturity makes it possible for us to face the challenges of life, learn from our experiences, have the capacity to love and receive love from other people and choose positive ways of living.

According to an article I found on the internet, the following are the signs of emotional maturity:

Responsibility: Taking responsibility for your own life. This means that you are slow to blame others when something goes wrong. You take time to understand how you contributed to the situation, identify what you can do differently when you are faced with the same challenge again and have a plan in place to take appropriate actions.

Having the Understanding that Vision Aids Knowledge: The capacity to envision problems and solutions to such problems is a good sign of emotional maturity.

Flexibility: Having the ability to view each situation as unique and adapt accordingly is also a sign of emotional maturity.

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Engagement in Personal Development Activities: The capacity to meet the challenges of life is associated with learning and development. Therefore, an emotionally mature person would constantly seek out avenues for learning new things and developing in varied spheres of life.

Openness to Varied Perspectives: when you are emotionally mature, you would be more likely to think outside the box, be open to a variety of views from others and feel less threatened when people disagree with you. You would indeed be open to trying ideas from other people that seems sound and better than your own idea.

Tendency towards being less judgmental: if you are emotionally mature you would be more likely to respect other peoples' belief or way of life. You would appreciate the variety of human beings you encounter daily and you would be less likely to criticise them.

Resilience: Emotionally mature individuals display a level of resilience (i.e., toughness) that helps them to successfully handle upsets, setbacks and disappointments they encounter in their daily living.

Calm disposition: I acknowledge that it is difficult to stay calm all the time in a precarious situation. I often tell myself that I want to be calm in the face of difficulties but to my disappointment, I sometimes display the behaviour that can be described as actions and reactions are equal and opposite. I display reactionary behaviour towards annoying circumstances when I would have preferred to stay calm. So it is not expected that we must be calm all the time. What is expected is a calm disposition most of the time. Anyone who explodes each time a person, situation or event appears provoking has no control over his or her life. The person is just living like a robot turned on and off by remote control. Emotionally mature person in contrast take control of their reactions to people and events.

Humour: An emotionally mature person is able to share pleasantries and enjoy self with family, friends and acquaintances in the right proportion.

Approachability: Emotionally mature people are good at building relationships. They break than walls and barriers and replace them with bridges. People feel comfortable approaching them.

Belief in self: Emotionally mature person do not depend heavily on praise, compliment and criticism from other people. They have confidence in themselves and are able to approach life tasks with a winning spirit.

Optimism: Emotionally mature people see both negative and positive sides of life. Their worldview does not consist of pessimistic understanding of people, situations and events. They acknowledge the saying that their is a silver lining with every cloud. They portray a realistic optimism about opportunities available to them in life. If they want to succeed, they put forth effort to achieve their goals. And when they succeed, they show a sense of understanding of the sources of their success so that successes does not constitute encumbrance to their future growth but rather inspires them to work harder for loftier targets.

In summary, emotional maturity is an essential ingredient for peace disposition. Those who already possess the characteristics associated with emotional maturity are blessed because they are able to relate with people well and experience inner peace that is seen in the way they approach life. For people who appear emotionally immature, there is hope for improvement.

According to Daniel Goleman (1995), emotional maturity or intelligence can be learned. It is not condemned to genetic predisposition or age. If you want to manage life more effectively, you must dispose yourself to develop this emotional maturity.

Everyday, I kneel in humble adoration praying to God for the grace to be a master of my own emotions. And each day, I take time to reflect on my reactions to people and events to note where I did well and areas that require additional work. I am able to identify my emotions from moment to moment but I face the challenge of managing them appropriately. Sometimes those I interact with remind me that I am a psychologist who should be able to do better with emotional maturity. But I do know that I sometimes struggle with being in control of my emotions. I do an excellent job sometimes and at other times, I do a terrible job with my emotions.

I do not know what the circumstances look like for you my dear listener. Have you mastered your emotions or are you struggling like me to gain mastery or have you abandoned yourself to the mercy of your emotion? If you want peace, you must learn to be in charge of your emotions. You must constantly put effort into improving your emotional intelligence. During my clinical training days, I had the opportunity of teaching children who display aggressive tendencies social skills that enabled them to get mastery at their own level to deal with challenges from their peers. I noticed that many of them significantly improved and they experienced improved emotional intelligence as well as enhanced academic performance.

In these times when violence, corruption, selfishness and mean spirit seemed to be pervading our society there is a clear need for you and I to work towards emotional maturity. There is evidence that fundamental ethical positions we take and the behaviour we display are controlled by our emotional maturity. Impulse is considered the channel of emotion and the seed of impulse "is a feeling bursting to express itself in action. Those who are at the mercy of impulse - who lack self-control - suffer a moral deficiency. The ability to control impulse is the base of will and character" (Goleman, 1995). Without these, we may well be unable to express the self-control and compassion our time and society needs to become a better and peaceful place.

As a cognitive-behaviourist, I believe that we can modify our behaviour. But it would require personal conviction, motivation and a willingness to change. Consider people you know to be mature - what do you like about them? Whatever you like in the way they approach life, imitate and practice until they become natural in you and then you too would appear mature. Our world needs emotional maturity and we must work towards it if we want peace. I on my part have committed myself to the constant practice of emotional intelligence. Please join me in this quest. Remember to ask the Holy Spirit to be your companion in this effort to enable you succeed and give glory to our good God. I pray for the grace to improve our emotional maturity so that we can approach life with hope, confidence, humor, flexibility, optimism, resilience, openness and the calm disposition that enables peace to reign. Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Leadership for Nigeria

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the grace to be patient, open to changing unhelpful behaviour and become truly vested in peaceful co-existence. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will share with you my listener from an article I wrote on leadership for Nigeria.

Reflecting on ethical vs. unethical leadership from studies conducted in western countries indicating that ethical leaders who exhibit empathy, trustworthiness, selfless attitude, and focus on collective mission tend to maintain optimal leader-follower relationships, one wonders whether similar results will be obtained in a country like Nigeria. Considering the attributes of the ethical leader (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; O'Connor, Mumford, Clifton, Gessner & Connelly, 1995), it is expected that followers of such leader will be more likely to imbibe the vision of the organization as interpreted by the leader and achieve the group goals as a result of intrinsic motivation. Having worked in a Nigerian educational organization for the past three years, I am challenged to believe that the cultural milieu or mindset of the average Nigerian in the workforce seems to be primarily centered on personal rather than group goals. It almost feels as though many followers perceive an empathetic, selfless and considerate attitude as weakness. Imagine working with a follower who seeks permission for a three-day off- duty to take care of personal health. You grant the request and four hours or a day later, you get a report from other workers that the follower is busy selling goods, commuting people with motorbike, keke, taxi or bus. In the spirit of empathy, you call the follower to order for engaging in such a dubious behaviour but the employee continues to seek and obtain extra work days off duty with fictitious or flimsy excuses. Health matters and death are very serious matters but many followers often do not reflect on the implication of misleading their leaders by lying about such matters in order to obtain some days off.

The most challenging type of work behaviour that takes advantage of the prosocial leader (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999) is that which I have observed among individuals who present themselves for employment. These individuals assure the manager that they know their work and are capable of contributing to the organization's goals but as soon as they are offered employment, they begin to demonstrate their incompetence. In some cases, some of the

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employees "just" sit around from beginning to end of work day doing nothing and yet, at the end of each month, they receive a salary.

Another insulting behaviour of some followers in Nigeria is the attitude of self-aggrandizement. You expect that an empathetic, selfless leader will engender selfless attitude among the followers. However, my experience of Nigeria has shown that regardless of the leader's behaviour, many followers continue to seek ways to "fill their pockets," instead of enriching their organization. In fact, I perceive a situation where many people are struggling to get a share of the "national cake" using any available means such as inflating the prices of goods, selling organizational resources, using organizational resources for personal matters, and extorting money from the less privileged.

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Reflecting on my experience thus far, I feel a great concern for the future of Nigeria when I think about how leaders are supposed to exert social influence that should lead followers to embrace organizational or collective goals. I wonder how the types of followers described above will move the nation's development forward. I feel that a charismatic leader is needed in Nigeria. Many have identified that the nation is in distress and has been in the condition for many years. If the literature on the emergence of charismatic leader in time of crisis is effective in the Nigerian context, it would have been the case that the nation should have arisen from her crisis state if there has been a leader with charisma. But given that prosocial behaviour appear to carry minimal valence for the average Nigerian worker, it feels as though a combination of transactional and charismatic leadership may yield a better result for the nation or rather the use of varied types of leadership models posited by Goleman et al. (2002) for specific situations may be more appropriate for Nigeria.

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It is important to note here that there have been stories of followers who maintain ethical business behaviour whether or not they have leaders who are ethical themselves in Nigeria. I have had the opportunity to experience individuals who are truly hardworking, accountable and responsible. These individuals attend to their work because they are intrinsically motivated to complete their job tasks well. Sometimes, I have heard people asking these types of workers why they have chosen to be exceptional in carrying out their tasks. These experiences I have had make me more convinced that one style of leadership may not be effective to get Nigeria out of distress. A leader guiding diverse followers, with some task-oriented, some responsible and some self-centered, must be prepared to manage each group with a style of leadership that will get them to deliver for their organization.

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In reviewing all the leadership styles posited by Goleman, et al. (2002), it is apparent that none of the strategies is totally positive. Each one has its pros and cons. Some are suitable for crisis times while others are better for stable organizational climate. Connecting back to my reflection on the Nigerian situation, it can be deduced that a dialectical and charismatic leadership approach is relevant to the nation. The leader would be better able to get the best out of Nigerian followers if the leader uses varied styles that match the ethics of different groups of followers and the context of the organization. Essentially, the ability to master the minds of followers and influence them appropriately would be necessary for the advancement of Nigeria.

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Further, the changing nature of the workplace, increased diversity, technological advancements, internet generation people, environmental challenges and global competition will require leaders to demonstrate emotional and cultural intelligence that will help them to be tolerant, empathetic and cooperative. Leaders must be capable of taking in varied information and solving complex problems effectively and efficiently. It is important to have a leader who can propound and implement solutions to Nigeria's many challenges and break the vicious cycle of economic, social and moral distress.

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Nigeria needs a leader who is capable of changing the structure and mindset of the people. Maybe someone with the characteristics of Jerry Rawlings of Ghana who was firm, consistent, earned the trust of Ghanaians and changed the landscape of his nation. The leader would also need to possess Ghandi's personality such that he can pray, fast and suffer to bring the nation out of distress. It may also be important for this leader to be a Julius Nyerere to Nigeria and encourage the people to contribute to the welfare of the community rather than personal aggrandizement. The leader would also need to embody the characteristics of Nelson Mandela who refused to accept "an eye for an eye" ideal insisting on holding the country together through promotion of reconciliation between people of European and African descent. Mandela saw and experienced the evil of racism and refused to accept a system of ethnic divide. Nigeria needs this type of leader who will bring the people to a self-consciousness that promotes unity. Martin Luther King Jr. during his lifetime strove to overcome hatred in all its ramifications and preferred the concept of working together for social justice. His activities and famous speech, "I Have a Dream" were instrumental to dismantling racial segregation and inspiring hope in the people of the United States of America. Nigeria needs a leader who will focus on stabilizing the nation, unsettling ethnic divide and enthusing hope and unity among the people of Nigeria.

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The stability of any nation usually passes through a gradual process. The whole history of the world is a history of colonisation, wars and dispossession. For example, Britain was conquered by the Celts who controlled the country for many years. The Romans in turn conquered Britain from the Celts, ruled for about 400 years and also integrated some elements of Celtic life into their lifestyle. In 450 AD, the Romans fell to the Angles, Saxons and Jutes (three Germanic races from Northern parts of Germany). The Anglosaxons during their reign also assimilated some elements of the culture of the people they conquered and introduced a language which is now known as Old English. After 300 years, another group of invaders from northern Germany, the Scandinavians, conquered many parts of Britain, having their influence in the so called Danelaw region of Britain. In 1066, the Normands conquered Britain, integrated some elements of British life into their own and brought the French language into the country. After the 1066 conquest, the nation was never conquered again on its own soil. It became a self-conscious nation and stopped being merely "the conquered." In the cause of time, towards the end of 14th century, the English Language was accepted again as the official language of their parliament (Corbishley, Gillingham, Kelly, Dawson, Mason & Morgan, 1998; Crystal, 1995).

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So, nationhood is a gradual process of going through difficult experiences which will give the people a feeling that they belong together and share a common destiny. This must be the road for Nigeria. We are just 50 years. We don't have enough experiences as a nation. We must allow the

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process of nationhood to run its course. We must be patient with ourselves. Trying to crush the baby, Nigeria, before it is old enough to take its place among the nations of the world will not be the right thing to do. It is only a charismatic leader who will understand that what is needed is the creation of stable structures and a redirection of the mindset of the people to focus on selflessness that will sustain the growth of the baby. We must pray for such a leader to emerge and lead us. If we want peace, we must sincerely work for peace. Remember that peace does not occur by happenstance. Hardwork and dedication to peaceful parameters is essential. Followers and leaders must both work for social justice and peace in order to have peace. I want peace and therefore as I am working towards peace, I continue to pray; let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

The Psychological Perspective of Cultural Diversity

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the grace to perceive our biological similarities. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will discuss the psychological perspective of cultural diversity.

Culture in the ordinary usage refers to finer things of life. Anthropologically, culture denotes the behaviours, attitudes, ideas, values and traditions that a particular group of people share and transmit to their generation (Brislin, 1988). Baumeister (2005), while reflecting on the influence of culture expresses that human nature appears to have been designed for culture. He asserts that "culture is a better way of being social." Baumeister further holds that it is culture that differentiates our socialization from that of social animals such as wolves which have continued to function the same way for the past 10,000 years. It is culture that capacitates human beings to survive. We are able to produce and eat food even during the seasons that are unfavorable to farming. It is culture that enables us to browse the internet and gain information that helps us to continue our advancement of science and technology. It is thanks to culture that we are able to access life supports such as electricity, antibiotics and tap water that most of our ancestors did not experience (Myers, 2007). Cultural diversity has been explored psychologically from varied perspectives such as acquisition of culture, cultural prejudice and identity formation. The focus of my discussion this evening is on how culture impacts the concepts of self, the world, experiences, values and identity.

Cultures vary to the extent to which you place high priority on the nurture and expression of your group identity or your personal identity. To gain a better understanding of these two identities, imagine that someone removed you from all the people you know and relocated you to a foreign land where you don't know anyone. In this new place, how much of your identity will remain with you? Psychologists posit that the answer to this question depends on whether you priority is independence (individualism) or interdependent (collectivism). If you are individualist, your identity (the sense of me, awareness of your personal convictions and values) will remain the

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same but if you are a collectivist, you might evidence greater loss of your identity (Myers, 2007).

When individuals from collectivist cultures are severed from their network such as families, friends, they tend to lose the connections that helped them to define who they are. The group identity provides a sense of belonging, value system, support network and feelings of security. To maintain this group identity, people in collectivist cultures give high priority to group goals, family ties etc. and define their identity in a way that is consistent with their interdependence ideology. Among collectivist cultures such as Asian cultures, greater emphasis is placed on shared practices and less attention is given to expression of unique self-concept (Choi & Choi, 2002). Compared to Western cultures that are more individualist, people from a collectivist culture like Nigeria may show greater concern for social harmony and loyalty, have a deeper and more secure attachment to their family, and sometimes give up personal ambitions because of their duty to their family. Psychologists posit that persons from collectivist cultures prefer social to personal identity (Myers, 2007). For example, to the question who are you, a student from an individualist culture might respond "I am truthful." But a student from a collectivist culture may be more apt to say "I am the third child of Mr. Okonkwo."

Because of the value placed on communal solidarity, individuals from collectivist cultures might put in more effort to minimize loss of face by others, maximize respect for elders and superiors, avoid disharmony and shun direct confrontation, blunt honesty, and uncomfortable topics, defer to others and exhibit a self-effacing humility (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). So a visit to the restaurant to buy a single cup of coffee that might seem fulfilling to a North American person might feel like a selfish action to a Nigerian (Heejung & Markus, 1999).

Visitors arriving in North America from Nigeria may wonder why disciplining a neighbor's child could be considered an invasion of privacy and has a legal implication or why they can no longer spank their children because it is an abuse when their culture prescribes that communal sharing demands that people give support to each other in raising their children because "*it takes a village to raise a child*." Nigerians arriving in the United States may also be dismayed that no one cares about their tripple or quadruple chieftancy title such as "Agu n'enye mba miri 1 of Manfe" and "Ochiriozo 1 of Kafanchan" or even "Onye chi goziri 1 of Ecume." The academic title of professor, reader or senior lecturer is not even attached to their names when they are called upon at social and cultural events. The best they may hear announced is their academic degree, doctor, if they have it. Whereas individualist cultures such as North America place more emphasis on individual achievement, Nigerians sometimes tend to feel that the more titles they acquire, the more they will be honoured at social gatherings.

People in individualist cultures may have more personal freedom, be able to take pride in personal achievements, be less geographically bound to their biological families and enjoy more privacy. In contrast, those from collectivist culture tend to remember those who have done them favours such that reciprocity becomes a social art. The notion of self is dependent on others and the idea of "no man is an island" is embraced completely so that happiness reflects being attuned to others (Kitayama & Markus, 2000). Thus, to the extent that a person identifies with individualism or collectivism, varied principles of cultural diversity play out.

Considering the speed of cultural changes, Myers (2007) points out that the "English poet

Geoffrey Chaucer (1342-1400) is separated from a modern Briton by only 20 generations, but the two would converse with great difficulty" (p.121). Myers opines that a lot has changed since 1960. Today middle class individuals are able to take flights to places they only read about in books; people are able to send and receive emails to/from people and places they could only send postal mails to in the past; telephone communication is readily available to most people. We now have an online village, shopping and dating. How marvelous to have these advancements in our time! Thanks to culture.

As we rejoice at the goodies associated with the speed of culture, we must recognize that not all the changes have been positive. We have seen an increase in the use of hard drugs and performance enhancers by humanity, higher rates of divorce and other types of crimes. We have also watched with mix feelings as most of our parents spend more time at work than at home and many of our teens have turned to "yahoo yahoo" as their pathway to riches.

Changes in human gene pool cannot account for the speed of culture because the genes evolve slowly. The only thing that is certain is that cultures vary, change and shape our lives. Cultural systems influence individual behaviour through their impact on each person's way of being and perceiving the world. Anthropologists and social psychologists assert that one cannot be a "self" by oneself because the self is embedded in a culture (Markus, Mullally & Kitayama, 1997). The concept of self and identity are grounded in the complexity of communal understanding and traditional behavioural patterns relevant to being in a given sociocultural and historical context. It follows that what people notice, think about, feel, are motivated to do and how they organize information give meaning to their life experiences (Markus et al., 1997; Tricket, 1996).

Sometimes we become so engrossed in observation of our cultural differences such as that noted between individualist and collectivist cultures that we fail to notice our similarities made possible by our shared biology. Despite our cultural diversity, our human kinship makes the cultural variations minimal. We humans share the same cycle of life from conception to death. We speak to our infants in similar ways as we respond to the cooing and cries of the baby (Bornstein et al., 1992). Research has led us to understand that regardless of culture, children of parents who exhibit warmth to them are more likely to have adequate sense of self-worth and less hostility towards the world than children of parents who display punitive and rejection behaviour (Njoku, 2011).

Therefore, on the surface, we appear to differ, but as people who are biologically connected, we share similarities. Although our languages may differ, they still reflect universal principles of grammar; our tastes for food may vary but they evidence the shared principles of hunger; our social interactions may differ but they still manifest the universal principles of human influence. These clue us on to the fact that human diversity is on the surface but the biological factors that bind us together is deeper. Therefore, reflection on similarities is encouraged when meeting a person of different culture because considering similarities can facilitate adaptation and understanding. It can help us to think peace instead of hostility. And when we think peace, we are more likely to feel peace and when we feel peace, we would definitely seek and embrace peace. My hope is that you my listener would begin to focus on our similarities in your interaction with people who look different physically and go for peace in all your interactions. Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Drug Abuse

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the grace our brothers and sisters who abuse drugs. In this edition of the programme, peace, I shall discuss drug abuse.

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June 26, a special day in my life, is the International Day against Drug abuse and illicit trafficking. The secretary general of United Nations Ban Ki-moon called on governments, the media and civil society to do everything possible to raise awareness of the harm caused by illicit drugs and to help prevent people from their use. It is in the spirit of joining this international effort that my story of peace this evening will center on drug abuse.

Drug abuse is a severe problem that can impact all aspects of health including, mental, physical, spiritual and social health. Tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, LSD, heroin, cocaine, amphetamine, and crystal meth are some drugs of abuse. Alcohol is one of the most widely used drug.

Alcoholism, also known as alcohol dependence, describes people who are unable to limit their drinking, who set limits and go over them, who try to cut down or quit and cannot, and who continue heavy drinking in spite of serious life problems caused or worsened by drinking (such as marital, job, legal, psychological, or physical problems). Persons with alcohol dependence are preoccupied with drinking and may spend a great deal of time anticipating drinking, drinking, and recovering from drinking. In a sense, drinking takes over significant parts of their lives.

Alcohol use problems lie on a continuum ranging from no problem to a severe problem. This is a process that usually involves shame. People who are becoming dependent will hide the fact from themselves and others, believing that they can, in fact, control their drinking when they actually cannot. It is best to avoid alcohol altogether especially if there is an existing predisposition to become addicted to alcohol such as a family history of alcoholism. As a rough guide, to maintain moderate drinking, it is recommended that young and middle-aged adult men consume no more than two drinks a day and women and those who are elderly are encouraged to limit their alcohol consumption to one drink per day. A “drink” is defined as 12 oz. of regular beer, 1 shot (1.5 oz.) of 80-proof liquor, or 5 oz. of table wine, all containing the same amount of alcohol.

With alcohol use, there is a high comorbidity rate of physical and psychological and behavioral problems. Psychological disorders and behavioral problems associated with alcohol abuse are: mood disorders (depression, mood swings, relapse of mania), poor impulse control, aggression, irritability, anxiety, and panic attacks. Physical problems associated with alcohol abuse are: hypertension, liver diseases, cancer, heartburn, seizures, insomnia and risks of serious injuries. In women, alcohol use could also result in pre-natal complication, menstrual irregularities, gynecological and obstetric problems and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders.

As drinking increases, serious and repeated problems may develop, including legal, job, family, and health problems. Eventually, loss of control occurs, and drinking becomes compulsive. Alcohol disorders are not all the same. Some people have fairly mild forms while others may have severe progressive types.

Many alcoholics find it difficult to recognize that they may need treatment. They often need help from friends and or family members to recognize their need for treatment. It is important for a person who drinks more than suggested moderate levels to encourage their support network to communicate their observation of the individual’s drinking and how it affects them. Persons with additional questions about the signs, causes, and consequences of alcohol disorders and the options for treatment and recovery should seek additional information from healthcare providers.

Tobacco

Tobacco use is also detrimental to health. Whether used as cigarette, pipe, snuff, waterpipe, bidis, etc, in mild, organic or flavored forms, tobacco tends to have severe health consequences. Worldwide, tobacco use causes nearly 5 million deaths per year. Current trends show that tobacco use will cause more than 10 million deaths annually by 2020.

Tobacco use, specifically, cigarette smoking is the leading preventable cause of death in some countries and it is responsible for about one in five deaths annually in these country. An

estimated 38,000 of these deaths are the result of secondhand smoke exposure. On average, smokers die 13 to 14 years earlier than nonsmokers. For every person who dies of a smoking-related disease, 20 more people suffer with at least one serious illness from smoking. Cigarette smoking increases the length of time that people live with a disability by about 2 years.

<div>Tobacco Associated Diseases</div> <div> Coronary heart disease (e.g., heart attacks) Peripheral vascular disease Aortic aneurysm High cholesterol Lung cancer Cancer of the mouth, throat and voice box Cancer of the pancreas Cancer of the kidney, and urinary bladder Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease Chronic bronchitis Emphysema Pneumonia Influenza The common cold Peptic ulcers Chronic bowel disease (Crohn's disease) Tooth decay (cavities) Gum disease Osteoporosis Sleep problems Cataracts Thyroid disease (Grave's Disease) </div>	<div> Some of the diseases caused by tobacco use include cancer, heart disease, respiratory diseases, smoker's melanosis, which leads to gingival lesions, nicotine stomatitis, cancer of the lips and coronary heart disease. Exposure to secondhand smoke produces similar effects in non-smokers, and in children it is associated with respiratory diseases such as bronchitis, pneumonia, exacerbation of asthma, and ear infections. </div> <div> Family, friends, coworkers, and others can be important sources of support for people who are trying to quit. The person must want to quit and must make the decision to try to quit, but others can contribute to that important decision. </div> <div> -Other Illicit Drugs </div> <div> Other psychoactive substances include marijuana, LSD, heroine, cocaine, amphetamine, and crystal meth. All these substances impact the body functioning in varied ways. Some act as depressants, stimulants and hallucinogens. These effects may change the brain functioning, causing permanent damages to the central nervous system and other body functions. </div> <div> Because of the addictive nature of these substances, it is best to avoid initial use. Potential treatments for substance abuse include medication, therapy, support groups, and inpatient treatment facilities. </div>	<div>Formatted: Font: (Default) Times New Roman, 12 pt</div> <div>Formatted: Line spacing: single</div> <div>Formatted: Font: (Default) Times New Roman, 12 pt</div> <div>Formatted: Line spacing: single</div> <div>Formatted: Font: (Default) Times New Roman, 12 pt</div>
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People who participate regularly in mutual help groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous also have better treatment outcomes than those who do not. Many people relapse once or several times before achieving stable abstinence. Relapses are common and do not mean that a person has failed or cannot eventually recover. If a relapse occurs, it is important to try to stop again and seek treatment. Ongoing support from family members and others is very important in recovery. I want you to know that there is hope for recovery from drug abuse. My profession, clinical psychology, taught me that no case can be considered hopeless as long as there is still opportunity to learn new things.

My dear listener, if you want peace in your family, you must avoid all types of drug abuse. Turn away from alcohol, the most commonly abused drug in the whole world. Most people do not know that alcohol is a drug. They justify its use with a variety of statement including its significance in traditional marriage. My beloved Catholic Church also uses alcoholic wine in its Eucharistic celebration. Today, I add my little voice to that of the United Nations and declare that alcohol is a drug that we must work on stamping out of our social, traditional and religious celebrations. I tell you, you can have a social evening filled with fun and joy without alcohol. We can celebrate the traditional marriage rite without alcohol. We can have a valid Eucharistic celebration without alcohol. Alcohol is a drug and we must desist from using it and encouraging others to do the same. Alcohol is a depressant. It depresses the activities of the brain. This depressive effect explains why people who get drunk are dis-inhibited and are prone to talk about things they would ordinarily want to hide. This explains why some people engage in illicit behaviours that are unplanned after drinking alcohol. This explains why those who drive under the influence of alcohol are more likely to have fatal accidents that result in deaths. This explains why husbands who drink, come home and fight with their wives at the slightest provocation. I can go on and on about daily occurrences that are a result of alcohol consumption.

Alcohol is not the only drug that is a treat to humanity. It is considered a big challenge because a lot of people do not believe that alcohol is a drug. They do not know that alcohol contains ethanol, a dangerous psychoactive ingredient. My dear listener, I want you to know today that alcohol is a drug that is detrimental to human health and family peace and that can result in immediate death if taken in large quantity that supersedes the blood alcohol concentration that are within life range. The other drugs I have discussed such as tobacco, marijuana, LSD, heroine, cocaine, amphetamine, and crystal meth are dangerous to human health as well. The greatest danger associated with tobacco use, especially in form of cigarette, is the problem it causes for people who participate in the smoking behaviour by virtue of being in an environment where another person is smoking. It is called secondhand smoking. It is because of this danger that some countries placed a ban on smoking in public places.

Drug use is associated with all forms of violence - prostitution, robbery, assassination, murder, suicide, homicide, physical fights, excessive lies and others. If you and I want peace, we must turn away from drug abuse.

I hope that someone who is listening to me this evening will make a decision to stop abusing drugs like alcohol, tobacco and others. I wish that parents could pay attention to their own behaviour and desist from laying a foundation for alcoholism and other drug abuse for their children. It is my hope that parents direct their children to better ways of achieving the highs they long for such as, exercise. I hope that young people can become more assertive instead of turning to drug use to feel confident.

I want you my listener to say No to all forms of drug abuse and say yes to peace. And on this note, I pray - let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

Feel free to share your stories of peace with me. My phone number is 0806 561 3687. On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

Social Responsibility and Peace

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the grace to be socially responsible and make peace our quest and aim. In this edition of the programme, peace, I shall discuss social responsibility and peace.

According to Social Psychology principles, the social responsibility norm denotes the expectation that individuals will help persons who are in need, especially, the vulnerable population (Kaliski, 2001; Myers, 2007). The general expectation is that individuals and corporate bodies are ethically bound to exhibit social responsibility, which is the obligation to act in ways that benefit the society (Kaliski, 2001). These actions can be passive or active. The actions are passive when individuals, groups or corporations avoid engagement in behaviour that is harmful to the larger society. An example of passive social responsibility is a company avoiding toxic waste spillage to their neighbours. When the activities are directly geared towards

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the advancement of societal goals, the individual, group or corporate action is perceived as engaging in active service. Active social responsibility is exemplified in the initiative of some companies that have established community projects aimed at assisting local indigenes to develop skills that capacitate them to be productive members of their communities.

There have been studies that attempted to understand and measure social responsibility among corporate establishments (Aguilera, Williams, Conley, & Rupp, 2006; Rupp, Williams & Aguilera, 2006). In the area of individual social responsibility, anecdotes of individuals who exhibited social responsibility are often shown through the media (e.g., CNN Heros). As social psychologists have asserted that social responsibility norm suggest that individuals will help those who need their help regardless of the cost-benefit ratio (Myers, 2007), it is expected that acts of social responsibility will abound in circumstances where power differentials exist. For example, teacher-student, parent-maid, and manager-employee relationships. This is sometimes not the case. Individuals with greater power sometimes undermine their ethical obligation to help those that are dependent upon them. When this happens, the outcome is considered injustice which tends to breed unrest and lack of peace.

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Nigeria seem to be in a state of quagmire because of varied levels of injustice in the country. One wonders whether we have taken time to reflect on social responsibility and how it can bring peace to our troubled nation. Social responsibility would lead us to seek to improve our country, Nigeria by becoming more cooperative, self-reliant, accountable, technologically savvy, good students, good lecturers, good workers, and problem solvers. It would lead us to consider why women and children suffer a great deal in our society, why widows in addition to the grief associated with losing their husbands have to bear being stripped of their means of livelihood and treated like nonentities, why children have to become adults serving as maids in other people's homes. In the education arena, we shall be asking ourselves why results sometimes miss when they are with us, —why we look down on others, why we set-up our lecturers and colleagues, why we sometimes fight those who have dedicated their lives to make a difference in the positive direction. If we consider all the whys above in the light of social responsibility, it is believed that we would be forced to do something to change the course of our country, Nigeria, especially in the education sector. Indeed, we shall sit down with our friends and ask ourselves whether "strike" option is the only strategy for getting our salaries paid.

Strike does not appear to be a veritable option for attaining our goals without hurting the system we serve (i.e., academia). A consideration of the varied strike periods would reveal that strike contributed to the academic and moral decay we all lament about daily. At no point in time has the government given full consideration of the package lecturers sought as a result of strike action. What is prevalent rather is that young people suffer, loose interest in acquiring qualitative education and lack the role model to redirect them towards preference for collective advancement. Strike does not teach young people anything positive. It demoralizes them and sometimes becomes their excuse for engaging in social vices such as kidnapping and armed robbery.

I dare to propose an alternative to managing our educational challenges brought about by inadequate financing of the sector. I propose that all universities, federal, state and private, work on funding lecturers salaries from tuition of students, research grants and project development rather than depending on the federal government for subventions for the salaries. Let us sit down with parents and students and generate a tuition formula that will make this possible. For infrastructural development, let us reach out to our entrepreneurs who are ethically obliged to engage in corporate social responsibility for support. Let us also become entrepreneurial so that we can model the type of lifestyle we expect our graduates to live. We have the capacity to design and bring relevant products to our Nigerian and International market. We need to put our brains and hands to good use. Alternative financing for our tertiary institution might lead to the development of a stable academic setting. We need a stable educational system to produce the "best brains" of the world in varied fields of learning. I wonder whether lecturers who embark on strike are oblivious of the fact that their younger generation will continue to suffer the effect of the strikes in the academic settings.

The effect comes as a result of lack of discipline that characterizes focus on personal advancement at the detriment of societal development. I am drawn to believe that each lecturers fight for salary upgrade without considering the impact of abandoning work. Education is not just what we teach in class. It is also about how we live our lives. Young people tend to learn faster and more from observations, both vicarious and implicit (Bandura, 1986; Njoku & Anieke, 2011). We have succeeded in teaching our young ones that the right thing to do when we perceive injustice is to go on strike rather than seeking for alternative pragmatic solutions to our challenges and choosing the best fitted intervention that is guided by social responsibility and maturity. I suggest that we try new ways of solving our problems. This is part of what education is supposed to do for us. Education gives us the flexibility to adapt to any environment and achieve our optimal capacity. If we continue to approach quest for salary upgrade the same way (strike), it means that our education has failed us.

Therefore, I call on all educators to rise up to the needs of our country and our future generation and choose to leave a legacy of social responsibility and peace. We all have a stake in the development of our country, individually and collectively. You might ask, can one person change the face of the nation? And I would answer, yes. I answer yes because many individuals of our time have done that. Pope John Paul the Second of the Roman Catholic Church, Gandhi of India, Rawlings of Ghana and Mother Theresa of Calcutta and now Pope Francis are people who have chosen to trod the road that is less travelled by most people. These people were change agents and they accomplished much in their respective domains. All of us can make a greater difference if we work collectively to maintain a stable learning environment. Money is not everything but we can become rich by exercising our brains and hands in entrepreneurial directions rather than strike actions.

We must choose to make a difference like John Paul the Second, Gandhi, Rawlings, Mother Theresa and others who we consider our heros. The difference may just be endowing pleasant greetings, good wishes, practical skills, advice, completing our students' result on time without seeking for gratification, apologizing to someone we have wronged, encouraging or challenging another person to do good deeds, modelling good behaviour, shunning bribery of all forms, showing tender loving care to our wives, husbands, children, parents, friends, colleagues, relatives and neighbours in the right proportion. I believe that these behaviours are gentle ways of being socially responsible. But we must also aim at other levels of individual and corporate social responsibility. We have the power to do good in the world as individuals and corporate entities. The major corporate responsibility of academicians is the production of quality graduates. Our country and our world need this service from us and we are ethically bound to engender academic and character formation in our work. Let us not disappoint the upcoming generation. Our children are counting on us for a brighter future. Let us not hand them a bleak one. Individual and corporate social responsibility in academic settings is the key to quality education and peace.

What am I asking you to do today? My dear listener, I want you to embrace Social responsibility. That norm that suggests that individuals will help those who need their help regardless of the cost-benefit ratio. I am asking you to become an active participant in building up social justice and a culture of peace. We can do this one day at a time and continue to pray: Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

Feel free to share your stories of peace with me. My phone number is 0806 561 3687. On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Psychological Effects of Violence on Young People

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the grace to live a culture of peace and protect our young ones from violence. In this edition of the programme, peace, I shall discuss the psychological effect of violence on young people.

World Health Organization (WHO) defined violence as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or ~~community, that community that~~ either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation. This definition encompasses both physical and nonphysical violence intentionally inflicted and unintended use of power inherent in social and institutional power relationships that are unequal (e.g. relationships between teachers and students, parents and children) but harm people or fail to prevent harm from occurring.

Violence can be directed to self (as in suicide and other self-abusive behaviours) to others (as in homicide, rape and others) or can be perpetrated collectively (as in mob action, state, town and other large group actions). Studies indicate that over 1.5 million deaths occur each year as a result of violence (WHO, 2008). Most of these violence-related deaths happen in ~~developing and developing and~~ least developed countries with low socio-economic status. For every violence-related death that occurs, many non-fatal injuries are perpetrated through violence. In terms of other forms of consequences, violence to children and intimate partners are associated with health problems such as engagement in negative lifestyle behaviours like alcohol consumption, smoking, hostility, prostitution and use of hard drugs. These behaviours can lead to chronic health conditions like depression, heart disease, cancer and HIV/AIDS. When violence is pervasive, local communities, states, and even a nation can be trapped in a poverty cycle that is difficult to break because of lack of security, education and increased disabilities that may result from high prevalence of violence. Read about challenges in the northern part of Nigeria associated with the Boko Haram threat and you would notice that the northern region and perhaps the entire nation is on its way to being trapped in a cycle of poverty.

Psychological perspective of violence presents two opposing views. One view posits that human beings are innately violent or aggressive. This source of violence has its root in philosophy where Thomas Hobbes suggested that "humans are naturally brutal and that societal laws and their enforcement are consequently required to curb our natural aggressive instincts." This innate aggressive tendency is supported by the views of Sigmund Freud, a psychoanalyst, who proposed that human tendencies are driven by instincts. The opposing perspective posited initially by Rousseau suggested that humans are born innately good but social influences impact the development of violence. Cognitive-behavioural, especially social learning theories, strongly holds that external or situational factors produce aggressive or violent tendencies in humans. The psychological perspective that places emphasis in the triarchic nature of the human person supports the notion that biological, psychological and social factors contribute to the development of violent tendencies. The psychological processes involved in violence that have been explored by researchers include cognitive, perception, appraisal and memory processes. Cognitive neo-associationism suggests that negative emotional states overtime tend to become associated with fight or flight responses. A person's reaction to fight or flee from an aggressive situation will depend on genetic predispositions, previous learning and ability to recognize

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external factors that promote or reduce violence.

Cognitive and cognitive-behavioural approaches work from the basic assumption that disordered behaviour such as violence or aggression is primarily due to faulty thinking (Myers, 2008). Using this cognitive and cognitive-behavioural framework, we can infer that some individuals appear to think and act with biases due to disfunctional cognitive processing that resulted from early faulty learning of cognitive schemas based on violence (Ellis, 1992; Beck 1999). Individuals who grow up in an environment that is laden with violence and aggression tend to view the world as a hostile place in which aggression and hostility is needed to survive. For such persons, simple actions such as putting one's hand into the pocket, waving hand in a particular way can be adjudged as threatening. This type of schema offers explanation for why we sometimes hear, see or read about cases where law enforcement agents shoot at unarmed individuals who attempt to put their hands in their pocket when they have legal encounter. Cognitive schemas can also offer an explanation about why some children and young men and women may become bullies at home, school and other environments. Faulty cognitive appraisal of the environment can make a person to fail to take into consideration all possible perspectives of any given situation before taking action.

Bowlby's (1988) attachment theory helps to further clarify why some people might be vulnerable to violent tendencies. Bowlby and his colleagues posit that attachment begins in early childhood. Some people develop secure attachment, some insecure attachment and others avoidant attachment styles. The form of attachment a person forms is dependent upon relationship with parents and parental figures. Bowlby and colleagues' research also posits that childhood trauma, loss, separation, death and abuses of varied forms have a long-term effect on the life of affected persons. This attachment theory therefore helps us to understand why developmental experiences can lead to the development of "tremendous desire for retaliation and revenge, at any cost" as a means to healing the emotional hurts from a person's past -(Aquilar & Galluccio, 2011; p. 240).

Both direct and indirect experience of violence can lead to varying degrees of psychological problems in children. In the first place, any event that threatens the lives of children can produce stress-induced problems such as Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Acute Stress Disorder (APA, 2000). Posttraumatic and Acute Stress disorders are marked by a pattern of severe negative reactions following a traumatic event. These disorders are accompanied by feelings of helplessness, intense fear, disorganized or agitated behaviour, difficulty in falling asleep or staying asleep, excessive irritability or angry outbursts, concentration difficulties, hypervigilance and exaggerated startle response. These symptoms then impact the social, academic and physical health. Sometimes children who have been traumatized by violence may experience dissociative amnesia which is an inability to recall important aspects of the trauma. They can also develop a "subjective sense of numbing, detachment or absence of emotional responsiveness" (APA, 2000; p. 221). These two disorders present critical challenges to children and require psychological treatment.

Other psychological impacts of violence on children are the development of trust issues, inadequate self-esteem, feelings of dehumanization, acceptance of the culture of violence, becoming perpetrators of violence and self-destructive behaviours. According to Erik Erikson (1963), young people struggle with issues of trust, autonomy and initiative. From infancy to age 1, children wrestle with "trust vs. mistrust." If their needs are met, they develop a sense of trust

towards people, their environment and the world at large and when their needs are not met, they develop mistrust. Violence impacts the ability of children to develop trust and the consequence is inability to establish loving and lasting friendships with others. When they grow into adulthood, if the problem of trust is not resolved, they will continue to experience difficulty trusting and relating with other people.

The psychosocial stages of development posited by Erikson (1963) suggest that the task of school-age period (6 years to puberty) is the struggle for competence, feeling adequate, able and productive. If children are able to learn and apply what they have learned to task successfully, they develop adequate self-esteem and if not, they feel inferior. When children are subjected to violence that precipitates fear, concentration difficulties and other harmful symptoms, they may have difficulty learning and completing tasks appropriately. For example, those who develop stress-related disorders may experience academic failure which will further reinforce their feeling of inadequacy and subsequently lead to poor self-esteem, a self-concept that is associated with self-handicapping behaviours that make children more vulnerable to failure and other maladaptive outcomes.

Constant experience of violence can produce a lack of sensitivity to violence in children. The modality for this type of psychological impact can be understood from exploring the consequence of practice and desensitization therapeutic approaches for treatment of fear. In ~~this therapy method~~this therapy method, individuals are exposed gradually to the source of their fear and with each exposure, the level of arousal decreases until the person's reaction to the feared object is normalized. Similarly constant exposure to violence leads to tolerance and emotional insensitivity to violence. This may explain why more people in the Jos region of Nigeria may be joining the unending massacre of lives and why young people engage in militancy in varied nations of the African continent.

Children can also develop a worldview that comprises a belief in violence and the need for aggression for survival. Children who have a hostile view of the world are more likely to resort to violence in their relationship with their peers and other people. Part of the consequence of the culture of violence is that children who believe in the need to be aggressive in order to survive often become perpetrators of violence. They are more likely to join gangs and any violence-related group to facilitate their successful implementation of violence on others. Sometimes, these children can develop self-injurious behaviour because of their experience of violence. For example, when the Niger-Delta region inhabitants felt disenfranchised by the nation, their young people resorted to militancy as a way of getting their right. Violence can breed this type of lifestyle in young people. Research on the impact of low self-esteem and exposure to violence shows that some young people lose the meaning and purpose of their lives, become helpless, hopeless, depressed and externalize their internal emotional turmoil by engaging in self-inflicted harm and other destructive behaviours.

The above described psychological ripples of violence on young people are all challenges that can be overcome with the development of a culture of peace. The best solution to the problems identified is protecting young people from violence. We must protect young people by developing a culture of peace. Fathers and mothers must find ways to manage their conflicts in nonviolent ways. Uncles, Aunts and grand parents must find peaceful approaches to resolving family matters and use these approaches. My dear listener you and I owe our young ones peace.

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Peace is possible. Peace will come if we work for it. It does not occur by happenstance. We must work for peace so that our young ones might experience and live peace.

Feel free to share your stories of peace with me. My phone number is 0806 561 3687. On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

Forgiveness and Making Progress towards a Peaceful Me

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the grace to forgive those who wrong us in order to let peace reign. In this edition of the programme, peace, I shall make a case for forgiveness and making progress towards a peaceful me.

Do you remember the story of the unforgiving servant in the Bible. It is in Matthew 18:21- 35 and it reads thus: Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, if my brother keeps on sinning against me, how many times do I have to forgive him? Seven times?" "No, not seven times," answered Jesus, "but seventy times seven, because the kingdom of heaven is like this. Once there was a king who decided to check on his servants' accounts. He had just begun to do so when of them was brought in who owed him millions of pounds. The servant did not have enough to pay his debt, so the king ordered him to be sold as a slave, with his wife and his children and all that he had, in order to pay the debt. The servant fell on his knees before the king. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay you everything!' The king felt sorry for him, so he forgave him the debt and let him go.

"Then the man went out and met one of his fellow-servants who owed him a few pounds. He grabbed him and started choking him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he said. His fellow servant fell down and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back!' But he refused; instead, he had him thrown into jail until he should pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were very upset and went to the king and told him everything. So he called the servant in. 'You worthless slave!' he said. 'I forgave you the whole amount you owed me, just because you asked me to. You should have had mercy on your fellow-servant, just as I had mercy on you.' The king was very angry and he sent the servant to jail to be punished until he should pay back the whole amount."

And Jesus concluded, "That is how my father in heaven will treat every one of you unless you forgive your brothers from your heart." My dear listener, every time I remember this statement, I remind myself that I must forgive anyone who wrongs me regardless of the pain associated with the hurt I may receive. I have spoken about the need to forgive in a previous edition of the programme, Peace. I expressed that forgiveness frees us and enables us to stay healthy. People who live in unforgiveness suffer from a myriad of diseases including spiritual atrophy, physical health problems such as high blood pressure and mental health problems like paranoia and depression.

I have a feeling that people who are unable to forgive other people do not receive forgiveness from our heavenly father.

Recently, I experienced a dead end that led me to wonder whether forgiveness should be limited to only those who ask for forgiveness. I had an unusual encounter with a person I considered a best friend that I loved very much. In this particular encounter, we were talking nicely like people who care about the welfare of each other and 30 minutes later the story changed without warning. I felt humiliated and hurt. I immediately sensed danger and began to tender apology for a crime that I may have committed unknowingly. I asked for information on what I did to warrant the humiliation I received but no answer was given to me. For more than a week, I

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continued to seek for the story behind my humiliation but none came my way.

One day, I asked myself why my supposedly best friend did not blink an eye before choosing to humiliate me. Something in me told me that I may be the cause of my own problem given my tendency to apologize for things that I did not do and my tendency to grant forgiveness to people before they even ask for it. I wondered whether it is best to display a little bit of malice, anger and frustration towards my best friend. For a brief moment I said to myself, how I wish I am the Gloria that learned to play the malice game along with other children when I was young. The Gloria that could sing" Onye ihem n'ewe iwe ya biko wegbuo ya, osukuso nwanmpi ya biko sugbuo ya, ikpota mama gi ma kpota mama mo, ikpota papa gi ma kpota papa mo. Mama mama obu nani gi n'enwe mama, Papa papa obu nani gi n'enwe papa. The Gloria that could also sing Ekwensu k'here mee gi n'uwa k'here mee gi ma gi ma ndi otu gi, k'here mee gi.

I pondered over my current challenge and concluded that I must not regret my intentional behaviour to learn and practice forgiveness in my life. But this story of my life reminded me of how challenging it can be to keep a relationship positive and alive. For a brief moment I wondered what life might be for people who are married to individuals who keep malice for minor infractions of personal life perspectives. I wondered how siblings continue to maintain good relationships with those who tend to keep malice and humiliate them at will. I wondered how individuals can maintain long-term relationships with those who sometimes disrespect and humiliate them and keep malice with them.

All these reflections led me to the conclusion that I must share my story with you my dear listener so that you may know that you are not the only one who struggles with forgiving certain types of people. I, the voice of peace on Radio Nigeria, Enugu, struggles too. I struggle with practicing and living peace but I have chosen not to give up on peace. I pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit each day. I pray for wisdom and I pray to be transformed into a perfect instrument of peace. I have not achieved my peace goals but I know that I have made a little progress in my quest for peace. I have chosen to find new ways to relate with my superiors, colleagues and younger ones in ways that promote peace. Sometimes I am successful with achieving my intended goal and sometimes I fail. But I will never give up on myself and my quest for a peaceful me. I will continue to make small steps towards peace. Hence I have learned that I must work for peace if I want peace. I am poised to continue to make my snail progress towards a peaceful me.

My dear listener, what is your own choice? Would you give up on forgiveness and peace because of the narcissism of your associates, friends and family? Would you give up on your husband, would you give up on your wife, would you give up on your child, would you give up on your sibling, mother and father? Or would you rather join the train of those who make snail progress towards achieving peaceful disposition in their lives. The choice is yours. But I urge you to take the path of forgiveness and peace. Allow yourself to feel empathy for those who appear narcissistic and powerful. Those who feel that they have everything going for them and must be recognized for their special attributes. Feel empathy for them because they don't know how to be consistently nice. No one will knowingly choose the part of narcissism or malice. I have a feeling inside me that those who engage in certain challenging behaviours do so because they have become prisoners of their own personality problems and they feel bad indeed within themselves. I feel that it is my job to empathize and show consistent love to my best friend, parents, siblings

and colleagues who might accidentally bruise my ego and humiliate me. I must continue to love those who hurt me just as Jesus advocated. I acknowledge that it is not an easy task so I continue to subject myself to the school of the Holy Spirit for the strength to continue my snail journey to a peaceful me.

My dear best friend, if you are listening to this story, I want you to know that I will always love you so long as the Holy Spirit puts this capacity in my heart. I long to see a change of attitude in you. I must confess that you have made some progress in this regard but it is difficult to be a consistent friend when you shut down and act with malice. I on my part will try to be conscious of your personality and minimize actions that might trigger negative interpersonal relationship. Please join me in working for peace.

I am indeed set on achieving my target of peace by the special grace of God. Bankers have money targets to achieve, marketers have customer targets to achieve. My personal target is to become a peaceful me as advocated by Gandhi. I pray that you my dear listener will set a similar target of peace. Let us join hands in institutionalizing peace and pray; let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

Feel free to share your own stories of peace with me. My phone number is 0806 561 3687. On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

Developing a Culture that will Capacitate us to Gain from Discipleship under the Holy Spirit

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the grace to develop a culture that recognizes the proper place of the Holy Spirit in our lives. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will discuss developing a culture that will capacitate us to gain from discipleship under the Holy Spirit.

Today my dear listener I wish to begin my story with a discussion of my personal spirituality about the Holy Spirit. Part of this spirituality is succinctly captured by the song, Come Holy Ghost Creator Come.

Come Holy Ghost, Creator come
From thy bright heavenly throne
Come take possession of our souls
And make them all the own.

This first stanza captures my belief that the Holy Spirit takes possession of our souls and make us all God's own if we let the Holy Spirit into our lives.

Thou who art called the paraclete
Best gift of God above
The living spring, the living fire
Sweet unction and true love

This stanza speaks to the fact that the Holy Spirit is the best gift of God from above. A gift that is called a living spring and a living fire. Living spring is associated with life and living fire is associated with Holiness of Life ... and Moses came upon the burning bush and a voice told him that he was standing on a holy ground. The living fire purges us of sin and purifies us for our heavenly home. This Holy Spirit is a sweet unction and true love. If you want to have a taste of true love, invite the Holy Spirit in your life. I believe that the Holy Spirit is sweet, calm and lovely. The Holy Spirit leaves an ardour of love in our hearts when we let the Holy Spirit into our lives.

Thou who are sevenfold in thy grace
Finger of God's right hand
His promise, teaching little ones
to speak and understand

Many of us listen without understanding. Many read the Holy Book, Bible, without understanding. Many see the signs of God in their day-to-day lives and fail to understand and

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may cannot speak the truth nor speak the message of love and peace which comes from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit impacts seven gifts.

Wisdom: The gift of wisdom renders the soul the capacity of good sense of judgment through the infused light of the Holy Spirit.

▲ **Understanding:** The gift of understanding renders the soul the capacity of seeing clearly the hidden sense of the divine truth not with human reason but with the infused light of the Holy Spirit

▲ **Counsel:** The gift of counsel renders the soul the capacity of guarded thoughts or intentions through the help of the Holy Spirit.

▲ **Fortitude:** The gift of fortitude renders the soul the capacity of being firm in difficulties and constancy in pursuit of the good through the help of the Holy Spirit.

▲ **Knowledge:** The gift of knowledge renders the soul the capacity to know or be aware through the light of the Holy Spirit.

▲ **Piety:** The gift of piety renders the soul the capacity of devoutness through the light of the Holy Spirit.

▲ **Fear of the Lord:** The gift of the fear of the Lord renders the soul the capacity of having reverential awe of God through the light of the Holy Spirit.

▲ According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (1995) Art. 1830, "the moral life of Christians is sustained by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These are permanent dispositions which make us docile in following the promptings of the Holy Spirit."

O guide our minds with the blest light
With love our hearts inflame
And with thy strength, which ne'er decays
confirm our mortal frame.

In this fourth stanza, I feel a yearning for the Holy Spirit and invite Him to guide our minds with blest light, inflame our hearts with love, and confirm our mortal frame with strength that never decays. This stanza confirms my story about the Holy Spirit being the ultimate source of true love. When I seek true love, I seek the Holy Spirit.

Far from us drive our deadly foe
True peace unto us bring

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And through all perils lead us safe
beneath thy sacred wing

In this stanza, I perceive the Holy Spirit as the gift of God that protects us from sinning and falling away from the grace of God. I see our deadly foe as sin which separates us from God. I feel that the Holy Spirit has the capacity to carry us on his sacred wing, leading us safe through the valley of darkness and bringing us to our heavenly home.

Through thee may we the father know
through thee the eternal son
And thee the spirit of them both
Thrice blessed three in one.

And now I feel that the Holy Spirit enables us to know the father and the son. The Holy Spirit capacitates us to call God Abaa Father, to accept Jesus in our lives and say Lord to whom shall we go, you have the message of life. The Holy Spirit capacitates us to interpret the mind of Jesus Christ and work towards imitating His footprints on earth. I must continue to stay enrolled in the School of the Holy Spirit in order to grow in love, wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, fortitude, piety and fear of the Lord.

All glory to the Father be
With His co-equal son
The same to thee great paraclete
While endless ages run

In this last stanza, I feel a need to constantly glorify the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son through the way I live my life, in songs and prayers with thanksgiving in my heart. This song remind me that I am Glory born to glorify God.

My dear listener, now that I have expressed a part of my spirituality about the Holy Spirit, I wish to share with you a challenge of our time that troubles my heart. This challenge borders on the use of the Holy Spirit as instrument of destruction. I hear people pray all the time and shout "Holy Ghost Fire." I hear people ask the Holy Spirit to go and break the hands of those who are holding their destiny as in the Song - Anam aju onye ji oke ahu ruru mu aka, oku muo nso gbajie aka ji ya ka oke nkem we ruem aka (meaning, I am asking who it is that holds my portion, may the Holy Spirit break the hand that I may receive my portion). The first question that pops into my mind when I hear things like this is - who told you that someone is holding your destiny, your portion and why must the Holy Spirit break the person's hand for you to get back your destiny? Haven't you read in the Bible about the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles who were at prayer and the Holy Spirit came and impacted his gifts on them. I wonder also whether you have not read the story of Jesus rebuking James and John for asking that fire be called down to consume a people who were disrespectful of the Lord Jesus. In this example of Jesus, we learn that the Holy Spirit is not to be called down to destroy God's creature. But what are we doing today? Many of us make a living out of calling down the fire of the Holy Spirit to consume people we consider evil and dangerous in our lives. Some of us can not conclude prayer without asking the Holy Spirit to go and maim those we consider enemies.

My dear listener, I am asking you today to reflect on your spirituality of the Holy Spirit in the light of this story I have shared with you and consider the place of the Holy Spirit in your life and the lives of the entire humanity. I want us to embrace the Holy Spirit as the true spirit of God that capacitates us to love God and human beings with all our hearts.

In every special way, I am using this medium to plead with my dear listener, the religious leader, ordained priest and pastor, bishop and others to help our people to desist from ascribing *Amadioha* attributes to the Holy Spirit. Teach our people about the true functions of the Holy Spirit captured in the song Come Holy Ghost, Creator Come. Teach our people about the Holy Spirit with imageries from the Holy book, the Bible. Teach our people to enroll themselves in the school of the Holy Spirit and attend lectures every day and if possible every moment.

I have a feeling that if we all understand the place of the Holy Spirit and approach him thus, this peace that I have been talking about; this peace that I believe that you and I want to have shall indeed be our inheritance. The Holy Spirit shall heal our divisions and unite us in love.

And now my dear, I must thank you for listening to my story of peace and end with a prayer to the Holy Spirit:

Holy Spirit heal our wounds, our strength renew; On our dryness pour thy dew; Wash the stains of guilt away; Bend the stubborn heart and will; Melt the frozen, warm the chill; Guide the steps that go astray; Come thou light of all that live and enkindle in us the fire of your love.

May the peace of God be with you. Amen. keep praying with me: Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Making Jesus our Role Model of Feeling Inner Peace

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the grace to have know Christ and set our minds on him. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will continue the discussion of last week focused on learning to show our belief by making Christ our role model as way to feel inner peace. I take my story this evening from an article on being true Christians

A wonderful story has been handed down to us from the East. It goes like this: There was a king's son who, being expelled in infancy from his native city, was brought up by a forester. He learned the ways of the woods as well as the trade of a woodsman. One day an official of his father's court discovered the young man and revealed to him his true identity. Suddenly he realized that he was nothing like the person he was brought up to be. Indeed, he was a prince.

So it is with us. When we come to Christ, we are rescued "from the domain of darkness, and transferred ... to the kingdom of His beloved Son" (Col. 1:13, NASB). We become royalty. And just like the prince, who had to take up residence in the palace and learn to think like a prince to claim his inheritance, we must adopt the lifestyle and mind-set appropriate to our new identity.

We begin by recognizing that our home is no longer on this planet. "Our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Phil. 3:20).

Earth is just our workplace now. "set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on Earth" (Col. 3:2). When we were born again into Christ, God "raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6). and therefore must allow only the mind of Christ to operate in us (see 1 Cor. 2:16).

How can this be accomplished? First, we must ask the Holy Spirit to give us faith in the Word of God. There is one truth in particular the Bible declares that is foundational for understanding our new role. It is that there is one man only in this brave new kingdom of which we have been made a part—the Man, Christ Jesus—and that the rest of us are in Him (see Eph. 2:15; Gal. 3:28).

This means that if anything is to be done—anything, anytime, anywhere—the Lord must do it. He said, "Apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). Once we have become Christians, we must function within the parameters of our new reality. The new reality is that during this life there is only Christ Jesus and us hidden in Him. "For [the old] you [has] died and your [new] life

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is hidden with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3). Only what He does is valid.

Salvation makes us privy to and a part of this divine, new reality. Our Lord made a choice—a decision—in eternity. Because of this decision, He established the pattern, or key, by which all mankind could be drawn into union with God.

Our Lord emptied Himself by setting aside forever His own self-expression so that—for love's sake—He might reveal only His Father. He said, "I can do nothing on My own initiative" (John 5:30; see also 12:49).

Paul said, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5, KJV). The word for "mind" here means attitude or mind-set, the frame of mind that Christ had from before the beginning of time, continued to have while He was on Earth and will have forever in heaven (see Heb. 13:8). This mind-set is that of living not to express Himself but to express His Father.

Likewise, His disciples are "no longer [to] live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf" (2 Cor. 5:15; see also 4:10-11, NASB). There is no other way to become His disciple but to deny oneself forever so that His self may be manifested (see Matt. 16:24-25; Luke 14:26-27).

These words are within the high priestly prayer of Jesus: "That they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us" (John 17:21). Have you ever wondered how this high priestly prayer could be answered? As Jesus emptied Himself of His own self-life, we are to allow the Holy Spirit to empty us of the natural or fleshly expression of our own selves. We are to be emptied of "the old" so that we might receive "the new"—Him in every way.

As the Father is being expressed through the Son and the Son through the believers, the Father and Son—by the power of the Holy Spirit—are being manifested through the disciple. "I in them, and Thou [Father] in Me, that they may be perfected in unity [with Us]" (v. 23). What power! What oneness!

Truly for Christians, this is a win-win situation. When we are born again, we are seated with Christ in heavenly places (see Eph. 2:6). We share His place in heaven, and He takes our place on Earth. Jesus said, "Abide in Me [in Heaven], and I [will abide] in you [on Earth]" (John 15:4). He does all the work, and we get the eternal rewards.

We receive the blessings and rewards of deeper union if we allow the Holy Spirit to empty us of our old self-expression (see Gal. 5:16). Once the truth has been revealed to us that "it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2:20) and that He alone can do anything—we must cooperate with the Holy Spirit to make that truth real in our lives.

The mind is crucial in this process since the mind is the most complex and potentially dangerous part of the soul. It reasons, judges, imagines, recognizes, ponders, remembers, understands, evaluates, knows, concludes—and above all, seeks wisdom (see Prov. 8:11). Wisdom is what Eve desired in order to determine on her own what was good and what was evil (see Gen. 3:5-6).

The mind of Christ is revealed in love, joy, peace, patience and so on—all the attributes we admire, applaud and desire. If we are to love the Lord our God with "all our mind" (see Mark 12:30), certainly that mind will need to be the mind of Christ—not the human one.

This brings us to the second step in the process of acquiring the mind of Christ. In addition to having faith in and acting on the truth of the Word, we must take a stand with the Holy Spirit against the use of our old or fleshly minds.

The Word tells us that the Holy Spirit is zealous to resist our old nature. "For the flesh sets its desire against [strongly opposes] the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh...so that [the old] you may not do the things that you please" (Gal. 5:17).

If we will stand with the Holy Spirit, He will render inoperable the "old," thereby allowing the "new"—the mind of Christ—to rush in to fill the void. But we must agree to having the "old" confined by the Spirit, as a prisoner is on death row—without reprieve. We are to learn to "take every thought captive and make it obey Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5, Good News Bible). By this means, all our words and acts will witness to His character.

We need to realize that living above in Christ is the normal Christian life—the only life we have at this stage. Anything else is subnormal and unreal. It is not a goal that only the most saintly aspire to. It is the gift of God to all believers who will seek it. It is simply to abide where we have been placed in Christ. Often we have been so conditioned by our former life that we think if we "set our minds on things above," we will be evading earthly responsibilities—something akin to "sticking our heads in the sand." Nothing is further from the truth.

Living above in Christ while we still walk and work on earth is "the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14, NASB). The foundation of this highest calling for every believer is to "keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God" (Col. 3:1).

The ability to set one's mind on things above comes from a heart that "is fixed," or steadfast, on God, as David's was. "My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready: I will sing and give praise" (Ps. 57:7, KJV). David also said, "I have set the Lord always before me" (Ps. 16:8). The word "set" means to put someone in a particular place. To set the mind means to cause it to pass into a given state or condition and remain there. How can we know if our minds are "set"? Here are some of the signs that the mind of Christ is operating in our lives:

Singing to God. A joyful heart prompts the mind to sing or make melodies to God whenever the mind is not required to speak to others or concentrate on some task. During much of every day we are doing routine things that leave our minds and voices (when we are alone) free to sing thanks and praise for all things. We begin to speak less to people and sing more to God.

Pulling away from the world. The world system that exalts the human loses its attraction, and we let the passing panorama of Earth go its way.

Simplicity. Life on earth becomes simpler and our needs fewer.

Change in focus. There is less need to call attention to ourselves or claim any good as our own. There is less prayer for ourselves, and there are more petitions for Christ to be exalted in everything.

Cessation of striving. There is a lack of striving, worry, or haste because we are doing all in God's presence and for His sake.

Avoidance of wrongdoing. Doing what is not right becomes more and more unthinkable and painful. There is a holy fear of dishonoring or profaning God's character (name).

Quiet spirit. A gentle quietness is in our spirits as we rest continually in Christ.

Acknowledging God. We place less emphasis on how much we are doing and more emphasis on who is doing it--acknowledging God in all things. The unseen becomes more real than the seen.

Abandonment. We entrust the whole of our earthly existence into God's hands so that Christ is glorified through us.

Focus on God. Some of our deepest pain comes from realizing at day's end how much time went by during the day when we were not thinking of, praising or thanking God.

Our new lives in Christ bring with them a whole new way of living. Much of what we learned in our "old" lives becomes obsolete as we take our positions in heavenly places and begin to operate with the mind of Christ.

Love and peace are in us not only for all the good people on earth but also for difficult persons because we see the lost as potential saints in Christ. When we are peaceful, those around us will feel the peace and if all Christians begin to live like people whose minds are set on God and heavenly things, peace will be a fruit of life that would be visible on our planet earth. It is my hope that you and I will begin earnestly to set our minds on Christ and live out what we believe in and have peace.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Faith and Submission are the Keys to Inner Peace: An Article by Sabastian Lulig

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the grace to have faith and a disposition towards submission. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will focus of faith and submission as the key to inner peace.

I begin with an article submitted to me by Sebastian Lulig

It often has been said that peace has to start from within. If we are not at peace with ourselves, we won't have the power to make and keep peace in a world full of conflict. Although we all know this to be true, we find it difficult sometimes to have this peace in our hearts. We are too restless, doubtful, worried and too hopeless to experience "the peace that transcends all understanding" (Phil 4:7). So how can we develop a peaceful heart that is perfectly calm even in the most disturbing and challenging circumstances?

To answer this question, let us look at an amazing story in the Old Testament. In Daniel 3, the three friends Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refuse to bow down and worship the golden image that the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Although they were surrounded by thousands of important people and a lot of pomp and music and despite the threats of being thrown into a burning fiery furnace, they just remained standing, while everyone else is on the floor. That act in itself is not just an act of courage, but of inner peace. These friends were so close to God and so convinced of his power, that they did not mind all the circumstances. They were perfectly fine just standing there and being looked at. If you don't have this kind of inner conviction and peace, you will never be able to firmly stand your ground, no matter the consequences.

As the story continues, the three friends are challenged by the King to finally bow down to his image. Despite his fury and his might, they answer: "O Nebuchadnezzar, we have no need to answer you in this matter. If this be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. but if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up." Their answer reflects a very balanced attitude that is needed for the attainment of inner peace. On the one side, they have a bold confidence in God. They believe that God might actually save them from the fiery furnace, although there was no recorded incidence that he has ever done such a thing in the past. On the other side, they show a submissive attitude by basically saying "If not, we will not bow down anyway". They believe that God can rescue them, but they also know that

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he might not do that. No matter what, they will submit to God's will. Their faith is bold and submissive. This gives them a deep sense of peace and trust even though they might die in a few minutes!

I believe that in order to attain an inner peace, we need a prayer life that is marked by both boldness and conviction on the one side and also submission and humility on the other side. Some people don't have a strong and bold faith in God and consequently they don't experience inner peace. They don't believe that God will help them and that all things will turn out good. Others do have a strong faith, they don't mind making bold requests. However, their faith might be marked by pride and selfishness. They just assume that God will do everything for them and if he doesn't, they are disappointed and miss the peace God has promised them. We need to ask and trust firmly and at the same time humbly surrender our will to God. This combination will give us an inner peace that will help us through all the fiery and challenging circumstances of life.

Reading through this article that uses the story of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego as a point of reference helps to understand that God would be in complete control of our lives if we let him. The problem that most Christians who profess faith in God have is that our lives do not reflect what we claim to believe in. Social Psychology tells us that our attitude to life is defined by what we believe and these beliefs predispose our reactions to objects, people and events. According to Psychologist Myer, if we believe that someone is mean, we may feel dislike for the person and act unfriendly. Steve Biko, the South African civil rights martyr said "change the way people think and things will never be the same."

Social Psychologists also postulate that people display the phenomenon of belief perseverance. They have done several experiments on this concept and found perseverance of beliefs. In one of the studies conducted by John Darley and Paget Gross in 1983, they asked participants to evaluate the academic potential of a 9-year-old girl named Hannah. One group was led to believe that Hannah came from an affluent community in which both parents were well-educated professionals. A second group was led to believe that she came from a low-income community and both of her parents were uneducated. Those who believed that Hannah was from affluent educated parents gave her higher academic potential ratings while those who believed that she was from a low-income uneducated parents gave Hannah less ratings. When they were shown a video of Hannah which indicated average intelligence, those who believed that she was from low-income uneducated parents gave her even worse academic potential ratings and those who believed that she was from an affluent educated parents gave her higher ratings. As you can see, the beliefs of the participants in this experiment controlled their attitude towards Hannah. This confirms the idea that people's beliefs define their attitude and reactions to objects, people and events.

In the story of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, their belief in God predisposed them to be peaceful and submissive in the face of a great challenge that had the probability of taking away their lives. I asked myself why most of us Christians profess belief in God and yet we lack this inner peace that predisposes people to avoid conflict and seek peace. We profess faith in the Lord who lived through joyful, sorrowful, glorious and luminous mysteries during his life on earth and yet we are unwilling to accept the challenges of life. We are unwilling to show forth

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our faith in God in the face of challenges. We are more apt to display behaviours that are contrary to belief in God. I wonder whether we really believe in God at all. If the Social Psychologists are right about the impact of beliefs on attitude and reactions to objects, people and events, it means that many Christians don't really believe in God. The behaviours that display violence, such as physical fights, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, murder, slander, kidnapping, kidnapping, stealing, instigating other people to fight and kill each other and their likes show that we don't believe in God. And perhaps, this is why we lack peace in ourselves, our homes, communities and workplaces.

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What does this question of belief in God call us to assess? I feel that each of us should carefully take time to evaluate what we actually believe in. If it is God that we want to believe, we must make our food the reading and understanding of the life of Jesus on earth led down for us in the Bible. We must place Jesus before us in whatever we do and ask him to guide us to live like he lived, to believe God and let our belief guide our lives. I bet that you my listener might be wearing a bracelet on your ankle that asks "what would Jesus do?" Today I advocate that you were this statement in your heart so that you would always ask what would Jesus do before you proceed on killing someone else with poison, gun, dagger and other life killing gadgets, before you make up lies and spread about other people, before you join the kidnapping syndicate, before you rape that baby, girl, boy, woman or man. You must ask what ~~would Jesus~~ Jesus would do before you instigate other people to destroy someone else. If you believe in God, Jesus must be your role model in life. If you make Jesus your role model, there is no way you cannot have faith in God and submit your life to him. And if you have faith in God and are submissive, you would experience the inner peace that predisposed Daniel, Shedrach, Meshach and Abednego to remain standing in the face of a serious trial.

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Our country, Nigeria, and indeed the whole is filled with challenges. We must make up our minds today to live with these challenges and still experience and live peace. This week alone, I have had ~~a myriads~~ a myriad of challenges that I cannot even start to enumerate them. My first experience on Monday nearly spoiled my day. It was by the grace of God that I turned to God for answer in the midst of my pain and suffering and he directed me and opened new ways to me. I followed God's lead and I believe that good things will come out of my new direction.

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If you evaluate yourself and find yourself wanting in faith and submission to the will of God, I invite you to ask Jesus to fill you with faith and be prepared to allow Jesus to guide your life. Don't give the devil the opportunity to mock God because of you. Show your belief in God by making Jesus your guide in life. I pray and hope that you will find the inner peace that would lead you to live peace. As always, I end with my mantra, let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Story Telling crosses over all Boundaries: it Speaks the Story of the Heart: the Story of the Two Warriors

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Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the strength we need to listen to each other's story, appreciate them and learn to discover the real meaning of living together. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will reflect on telling stories.

I begin with a story by Allison Cox who said that storytelling crosses over all boundaries for it speaks the language of the heart.

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Stories have great power to heal, as well as to entertain. This story, called "The Two Warriors," by Dan Keding, has been a favorite among the Irish audience who are working to heal the rift in their country, but it speaks to human beings everywhere. Here is the story - Once there was a war and two armies came together in battle. They fought from the time the sun came up in the east till it set in the west. When the day was at a close, only two warriors remained, surrounded by their dead comrades covered in the blood and gore of war.

They stood facing each other, so exhausted from death that they could barely move. Finally one said, "Let us rest until dawn and then finish this fight and only one will go home." The other warrior agreed.

And so they took off their dented helmets and unstrapped their shields and sheathed their swords. They lay down among their fallen comrades only a few feet apart from each other. But they were so weary that they could not sleep. It was the weariness that comes with too much killing. Finally one turned to the other and spoke.

"I have a son at home in my village and he plays with a wooden sword. Someday he wants to grow up and be like me."

The other man listened and finally replied, "I have a daughter at home and when I look into her

eyes I see the youth of my wife.”

The two men started to tell each other stories. Stories of their families, their villages, their neighbors, the old stories that they learned at their grandparents’ knees when they were young. All night long they told stories till the sun started to creep to life in the east.

Slowly they stood and put on their helmets. They buckled on their shields and drew their swords. They looked deep into each others’ eyes and slowly sheathed their swords and walked away, each to his own home.

This story helps us to understand the importance of dialogue, the importance of hearing the other person. I have come to the conclusion that some of the violence we met out to each other occur as a result of lack of knowledge of our personal and collective stories. For example, I learned more about the Nigeria/Biafra war through the story of Chinua Achebe in *There Was a Country*. From this story I gained some insight into certain challenges of the Igbo person. For example, I began to attribute some violent behaviours I see to the ripple effect of seeing and living in a violent environment wondering what the next minute will bring and at the same time striving to get a chunk of the national cake by any means available to us. I began also to understand a little bit why people make money in Nigeria and go overseas to store them in their banks. Can you my listener key in to this - if you were a very rich man or woman and overnight became very poor because all you had was reduced to 20 pounds, you would learn to find alternative way to deal with the future.

However, what I have been grappling with is understanding why some of those who saw the war and its devastating effects appear to be craving for violence. Or rather I should say that I understand why some people who witnessed the impact of violence are drawn to more violence. My world of Psychology helps me to know that these behaviours can become addictive. For example once a person begins to engage in rape whether it is a family member or outside people, there is a constant desire in the person to rape another person. When someone steals the first time, the stealing habit has a greater likelihood of continuing. Similarly engagement in use of drugs such as alcohol, cocaine, heroin, valium, cigarette, tobacco, marijuana (aka Igbo, weed), LSD, opium, amphetamines and their likes have the same addictive effect. The best thing is not to begin the behaviour. This is because once started, the reinforcing effect of the behaviour will make it more attractive. For example, when a person steals and felt pleasure because of the monetary value of the stolen items, the pleasure of having money would be more powerful than the risk associated with breaking into a house and stealing from its occupants. When a person takes alcohol and momentarily forgets the challenges of life, the pleasure associated with the drink would be strong and more likely to push a person to use alcohol to manage difficulties as opposed to facing them.

What am I saying in this story, our attitude to people who engage in these types of behaviour should lead us to seek out ways to help them to stop such behaviours. We should seek to understand the underlying reason why they began the behaviour in the first place. As true Christians we must pray for them and direct them to where they would be rehabilitated. It would be very wrong for us to enable their behaviour by hiding them or supporting their bad behaviour. This is one part of hearing peoples story. But there is another important one that helps us to

overcome our religious, cultural and ethnic prejudices. This comes from making effort to learn the religion, culture and other aspects of people that would help us better appreciate them. It calls for the revival of the culture of ~~story-telling~~storytelling. It is why I tell you stories of peace on this programme, peace. It is why I ask you to send me your own stories of peace so that I can share it with other people. I believe that sharing our stories of life have the capacity to touch other people's lives. The story of the warring men I began with in this edition ended on a good note. After sharing stories of one another, they were unable to hurt themselves, each man went back to his family. Would it be possible for friends, families, communities and towns that are at war with each other to call a summit for sharing stories that are relevant to them? I wish that we can share stories that would help us to overcome our prejudices against one another. And how I wish those stories will help us to become more peaceful.

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My hope is that this programme, peace would touch lives and bring peace to warring hearts, homes, communities, towns and states. It is challenging for me to prepare these stories and make out time to share it with you and at the same time struggle to find the fund to air it through this radio medium. It would be ~~more~~easier for me to focus on doing my little chores and tasks in my office work and religious living. But I have been inspired to share this programme peace with you. Each time I get a phone call or a text from you my listener informing me of how it has helped you, I feel joy and a sense of fulfillment in my heart and I praise God the doer of great things for bringing peace to one more heart, couple, home, parish or community. My joy in this effort comes from you my listener and I believe that God will bring to fulfillment his purpose for you on earth.

I pray that peace will be with you today and always. Amen. Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am
Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Developing a Culture of Persistence Called Peace: A Story by Chibuike Okoro

Good evening dear listener. Today we pray for the grace to develop a culture of persistence called peace. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will present a story written by Chibuike Okoro.

It begins with a short story by Revd. Sun Myung Moon taken from “As a Peace-loving Global Citizen, foreword pages x - xi and published by Gimm-Young Publishers Inc., 2009”

“A steady spring rain fell all last night, ending a winter drought. It was so nice to have had the rain that I spent all this morning walking about in the garden. The ground had that fragrant aroma of moist earth I had missed all through the winter, and the weeping willow and cherry trees were showing signs of new spring buds.

I felt I could hear the popping sounds of new life sprouting here and there around the garden. Before I knew it, my wife, who had followed me out, was picking young mugwort shoots that had managed to poke their heads up through the dry lawn. The night’s rain had turned the whole world into a fragrant spring garden.

No matter how much commotion there may be in the world, when the calendar turns to March, spring is on its way. The older I become, the more it means to me that in nature spring follows winter and brings with it flowers in full bloom. What am I that God, in each season, allows the flowers to bloom and the snow to fall, so I might know the joy of being alive? Love wells up from within the deepest recesses of my heart, and I am overcome with emotion.

I am moved to tears to think that everything of real value has been given to me freely. In my life, I have circled the globe many times over in my efforts to bring about a world of peace, and yet it is here in this garden in spring that I am able to taste real peace. Peace, too, was given to us by God, but we lost it somewhere and now spend our lives looking for it in all the wrong places.

To bring a world of peace, I have spent my life going to the most lowly and secluded places. I

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met mothers in Africa who could only watch helplessly as their children died of hunger, and I met fathers in South America who lived by a river full of fish but couldn't support their families by fishing. At first, all I did was simply share my food, but they granted me their love in return. Intoxicated with the power of love I went on to plant seeds and cultivate forests.

Together we caught fish to feed hungry children, and these trees were used to build schools. I was happy even as mosquitoes bit me all over as I fished all through the night. Even when I was sinking knee-deep into mud, I was happy because I could see the shadows of despair disappear from the faces of my neighbors”.

In this short story Rev. Moon reveals an new world of peace to us. He helps us to see that peace can be shared. He shows us that we can reach out to people who may look different from us. Rev. Moon also tells us that we can have peace in the word of God, in a garden or among the people.

The Rev. Moon story reminds me of why I began this programme peace which is to tell stories of peace. Stories that are from real life experiences, the Bible and research. So my dear listener, if you have a story of peace. Please send it to me so that I share the story on this programme and perhaps help others to find peace.

Here are some suggestions Mr. Okoro sent in for developing a culture of persistence called peace.

Let the people speak: There are many stories to tell—stories soaked with violence, the violation of human dignity and the destruction of creation. If all ears would hear the cries, no place would be truly silent. Many continue to reel from the impact of wars; ethnic and religious animosity and discrimination based on race. Thousands are dead, displaced, homeless, refugees within their own homeland. Women and children often bear the brunt of conflicts: many women are abused, trafficked, killed; children are separated from their parents, orphaned, recruited as soldiers, abused. Citizens in some countries face violence by occupation, paramilitaries, guerrillas, criminal cartels or government forces. Citizens of many nations suffer in the hands of governments obsessed with national security and armed might; yet these fail to bring real security, year after year. Thousands of children die each day from inadequate nutrition while those in power continue to make economic and political decisions that favor a relative few. Let us tell our stories of wars, violence and peace.

Let the Scriptures speak: The Bible makes justice the inseparable companion of peace (Isaiah 32:17; James 3:18). Both point to right and sustainable relationships in human society, the vitality of our connections with the earth, the “well-being” and integrity of creation. Peace is God’s gift to a broken but beloved world, today as in the lifetime of Jesus Christ: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you.” (John 14:27). Through the life and teachings, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we perceive peace as both promise and present—a hope for the future and a gift here and now.

Let justice embrace peace: Without peace, can there be justice? Without justice, can there be peace? Too often, we pursue justice at the expense of peace, and peace at the expense of justice. To conceive peace apart from justice is to compromise the hope that “justice and peace shall embrace” (Ps. 85:10). Therefore we need to allow peace and justice to have a place in our lives,

homes, cities, towns, villages, states and the nation.

Let the church speak: As the Body of Christ, the church is called to be a place of peacemaking. In manifold ways, especially in the celebration of the Eucharist, our liturgical traditions illustrate how God's peace calls us to share peace with each other and with the world. Yet, more often than not, churches fail to live out their call. Christian disunity, which in many ways undermines the churches' credibility in terms of peacemaking, invites us to a continuous conversion of hearts and minds. Only when grounded in God's peace can communities of faith be "agents of reconciliation and peace with justice in homes, churches and societies as well as in political, social and economic structures at the global level" (WCC 4 An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace Assembly, 1998).

The church that lives the peace it proclaims is what Jesus called a city set on a hill for all to see (Matt. 5:14). Believers exercising the ministry of reconciliation entrusted to them by God in Christ point beyond the churches to what God is doing in the world (see 2 Cor. 5:18). Christians must embrace this culture of reconciliation and thus give peace a home in their lives.

ENSURING JUSTICE, PEACE AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF CONFLICTS

Transforming conflicts is an essential part of peacemaking. The process of transformation begins with unmasking violence and uncovering hidden conflict in order to make their consequences visible to victims and communities. Conflict transformation aims at challenging adversaries to redirect their conflicting interests towards the common good. It may have to disturb an artificial peace, expose structural violence or find ways to restore relationships without retribution. I am aware of structural violence in our society examples of which are the customs attached to widowhood. I hope that the quest for peace will get us to the point of revisiting the treatment of a woman when her husband dies. I am looking forward to a time that women and their children will no longer suffer additional burden imposed by the cruelty of society following the death of the husband/father. I believe that we do indeed need to work towards instituting justice and peace at all levels of our lives so that peace can make its abode among us. And let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer Fidelis Onoh, the studio Manager _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you a peaceful night rest. Tune in again same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Education and Peace

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the grace to bring back education in our country Nigeria to its former glorious state and bring peace. In this edition of the programme, peace, I shall discuss education and peace.

Peace, violence reduction and security are among the agenda of the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals and Nigeria's vision 20:20:20. Although there ~~has been attempts~~ have been attempts to promote a holistic view of peace, for many people, peace is perceived as the absence of war and many continue to consider war and other forms of violence the primary means of ensuring peace.

The Secretary of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, in his address on the 2013 International Day of Peace spoke about the importance of peace which according to him is the foundation upon which the United Nations is built. Mr. Ki-moon noted that many people in varied parts of the world are struggling to maintain a descent living, many are living in extreme poverty that leaves them hungry and fearful of the advent of each new day and many work very long hours under very difficult situations. He also spoke about conflict and bloodshed associated with traditional, cultural, ethnic and religious differences and the need for the world to recognize that peace is an essential factor for the survival of the human race.

In dedicating the 2013 International Day of Peace theme to Education for Peace, the United Nations underscores the importance of learning about peace. The Hague Appeal for Peace Global

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Campaign for Peace Education posits that "a culture of peace will be achieved when citizens of the world understand global problems, have the skills to resolve conflicts and struggle for justice non-violently, live by international standards of human rights and equity, appreciate cultural diversity, and respect the Earth and each other. Such learning can only be achieved with systematic education for peace." If education is the conduit to growth and development, it is expected that education will lead to social responsibility that has the likelihood of ensuring the eradication of poverty, better work conditions, stable economies, positive interpersonal relationships and good citizenship.

As Nelson Mandela said, the world must make use of education, the most powerful weapon of change, to create and sustain peace. All nations must realize that the education of every human person, male and female is necessary for the survival of the human race and for growth and development. It is important to open up this pathway to decency, respect, tolerance and justice to all humankind. Let all people learn of their roles in the world and take responsibility for ensuring the viability of the human race.

The term education has been interpreted in varied ways reflecting process and product perspectives. As a process, education refers to the way through which individuals develop holistically embracing, academic, physical, mental, social and spiritual development (Njoku, 2008). As a product, education describes the level achieved (i.e., elementary, secondary, college, university etc.). ~~Education as a process suggest~~ Education as a process suggests that individuals need to be active participants in their education to acquire the merits of learning. It is not enough to go through the varied levels of education (quantity), the quality of education is what makes us exceptional. The quality empowers us to show academic, social, mental and spiritual prowess in our lives. The concept of academic prowess challenges us to garner the skills with which our course of study is endowed in such a way that we can defend our learning when called upon by duty to do so (Njoku, 2008).

Education has been through varied stages of growth in the world and in Nigeria in particular. There was a time in history when education in Nigeria was respected by the international world. There was a time when being a teacher was considered synonymous with honesty, discipline and respect. Today, the story about Nigerian educational settings has greatly changed such that decadence of both the academic and character formation is the headline that is often discussed by varied sectors of the nation and the world. It appears that education has failed to communicate its primary goals of academic and character formation that promote justice, respect, equity, growth and development. It is therefore important for educational institutions to reflect on their mandate, refocus and make targeted effort to ensure that education achieves its goals.

Since the United Nations and Nelson Mandela have identified education as the most powerful tool for creating and sustaining peace. I am once again challenging all educators as I have done in the past to rise up to the occasion calling for reformation of our educational institution to

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achieve the goal of teaching and living peace.

This week, I encountered a variety of undergraduate and graduate students who shared their frustration with their academic institutions with me. One person told me how he had spent over four years waiting for opportunity to be called to defend his thesis proposal in one of our old generation universities. Now in the fifth year of waiting he opted to begin afresh at another university instead of waiting endlessly. Another told me how his university frustrates students' effort by not releasing their results on time for them to take action to remedy their deficits early. Many of those I encountered spoke about this same issue of release of results. Parents also called from varied parts of the nation with similar complaint bordering on issues of not knowing when their children would graduate and whether they will learn well. Companies complain that they are getting employees who hold certificates without the skills commensurate with the certificates.

This is just the story of those in the university settings. In another edition of the programme, peace, I will bring you the stories of those in the secondary and primary schools. So let's stay with the university education. As I was saying earlier, education is considered by the United Nations as the primary mode of creating and sustaining peace. In the light of the stories of some of our undergraduate and graduate students, I wonder how university education can engender peace in students when its process frustrates the students.

In my previous stories, I had discussed the importance of experience and how it impacts our perception. I am worried that enduring frustration can make young people more vulnerable to violence. I am worried that a percentage of these students who are experiencing frustration in their academic institutions might become perpetrators of similar frustrating behaviour.

So what can we do to change the face of education in our country? My dear listener, the lecturer or professor, I feel that it is you and I that must begin the movement for change of scenario. We must deconstruct the ideologies that have led us into frustrating students. These students have been placed under our care making us their surrogate parents. If you and I are the parents, and the students are the children under our care, we must treat them as such. Their problem must be our problem and their progress our progress. We must teach them, mark their examinations and release their results on time. We must read their projects and thesis and guide them to timely completion of their work so that they can graduate on time. We must teach them theoretical and practical application of their learning. We must be good parents raising safe children in our academic settings.

I believe that if we take the job of parenting the students under our care seriously, the frustration

they currently experience would be minimized. I encourage you my dear listener to do your utmost best to contribute to making the life of students on our campuses peaceful and calm so that they can study under helpful environment and garner the moral and academic excellence we purport to inculcate in students. I believe that having peaceful and calm academic environment would create and sustain peace. So let us work towards peace by being good guardians of the students placed under our care. Let us teach them well, model good behaviour to them and inspire them to become peaceful members of our society. Let us continue to pray: let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

Feel free to share your stories of peace with me. My phone number is 0806 561 3687. On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

Education and Peace 2

Good evening my dear listener. We continue to pray for the grace to bring back education in our country Nigeria to its former glorious state and bring peace. In this edition of the programme, peace, I shall continue my discussion on education and peace with reference to university

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settings.

Last week, I addressed you my listener, the lecturer and professor in the university. Today, I feel a great need to reach out to you my dear student, undergraduate and graduate. I don't know whether you are aware that I am teaching in the university. Yes, I am a lecturer and have been one for many years both here in Nigeria and overseas. Whatever I am telling you today comes from my experience of you the student. Before I became a lecturer, I was a student.

So I begin my story from my student days. In those days, when I went to the Library to study I saw many students scouting for the same knowledge that I am searching for, reading assiduously in varied corners of the Library. When I went to lecture halls, I saw many students struggling to be the first to arrive for lecture. After lectures, I saw groups of students gathered together for small group studies. When I volunteer at research and practice centers for hands-on experience, I found myself competing with many students who arrived at the scene before me. The summary of the story is that I experienced university education with competitive students who were working assiduously to merit the coveted prize of getting degrees with highest honour (Summa Cum Laude). Students who have resumes that include work experience.

I concluded my education some years ago and entered the world of university lecturing. I experienced students who demonstrated similar attributes as those I described earlier. When I walk into the classroom to lecture, I found many of them already seated waiting to learn. When I give assignments, my students turn in their work before the due date. When I ask them to do practical experiments they do so and return with evidence of completion. When I advertise for volunteer research assistants, many of them apply forcing me to tighten the criteria for acceptance. And when they volunteer, they attend to their research work assiduously. Like me, they join in coauthoring scientific articles.

Then I relocated and found myself face-to-face with a generation of students that I have to find creative ways to motivate them to learn. I experienced a culture shock. I never imagined in my world that I need to beg some students to attend lectures. I had some students who were always in the lecture hall on time for lectures and I had some who did not care to attend lectures at all. I was then forced to keep attendance register for each lecture period so that only those who have attended at least 70% of the time may sit for my examination. Trust this group of students that I am speaking about. They found ways to manipulate the system by writing and signing the names of other students. Then I got smarter and started using CCTV to aid me in after class identification of those who attended lectures. Could you imagine how I had to spend energy and time on this out-of-the-classroom activity to ensure that students who demonstrate responsibility in their learning are rewarded.

Why am I telling you my listener, the student, this story. I am telling you this to let you know that you sometimes frustrate your lecturers by being irresponsible. Your parents or guardians pay for you to learn and place you under our tutelage but you resort to evading lectures for reasons best known to you. You also miss quizzes and examinations and surface later to request for favours you know you do not deserve. Sometimes you enter the university through fraudulent practices like when someone writes your examination for you and when you obtain your results from special centers. You even enter cult groups in order to get power to intimidate your lecturer into carrying out your commands.

You see my dear listener, the student, you are part of Nigeria's big problem when you engage in these types of behaviour. You subvert efforts made to raise you into becoming a person with moral and academic excellence. But when you take your education seriously, you help to build up our nation. You grow into a contributing member of the society and if you become a lecturer like me, you will help to raise a new generation of leaders who would further advance our nation.

It is indeed a disservice to the nation and humanity if you get a university education without the skills and competences associated with your field of study. One way you can acquire the skills and competences is by making sure that you learn the materials taught in class. Another way is through reading good textbooks and scholarly articles in your field. And another way is by volunteering with industries or organizations for hands-on experience. You might also consider identifying a person in your field who can serve as your mentor and guide you towards attaining excellence in your field.

My dear listener, the student, you can generate other ways of improving your theoretical and practical knowledge. You owe it to yourself and the society to work hard and develop yourself. Hard work pays. Take my word for it - hard work pays. I know you might be thinking about the Nigerian situation where sometimes *ima madu* takes precedence over competence. The tide is changing. Employers are realizing that the need competent people to break even in their business and they are beginning to choose competence over *ima madu*.

On another note, when you get a job that you do not have competence for, you find yourself struggling with self-esteem issues because of your inability to accomplish the duties assigned to you. This reminds of the story of a young woman (I will call Anthonia) who graduated from one of our elite universities with a second class, upper degree and was offered a job by one of a big banks through the influence of her father, a rich and diligent man. Anthonia went to work for few weeks and realized that she could not cope with the workforce. She went home to her father and told him the story of her education. What was Anthonia's story. Anthonia bought all her grades in the university. She did not study or attend lectures. She used her father's wealth to buy her degree certificate. Now, Anthonia realized her mistake and went back to her father like the prodigal son in the Bible. Although I was saddened by these choices Anthonia made that got her into the situation of not knowing how to complete tasks assigned to her at the bank, I was

consoled that Anthonia told her father that she would like to take JAMB again and go back to the university. Today my dear listener, Anthonia is in the university and this time assiduously working to get both theoretical and practical knowledge.

My dear I would not want you to go through what Anthonia now calls the story of her past. If you are just entering the university, take a decision in favour of hard work, moral and academic excellence. Take a decision for holistic education. Today's market needs people who are balanced in character and learning. People who can think creatively and solve the problems of our society. Education is the gateway to achieving the knowledge and problem solving skills that would enable you to become a contributing member of our society.

I pray and wish that you can choose the option of opening yourself to the learning experience offered in your university.

If you have already made the mistake of avoiding your lectures, all hope is not lost, you can make amends. Talking about making amends, I was deeply impressed by the choice one student (I will call George) made recently. He was already in the four hundred level when he came to me. George explained how he had been unable to learn and take some of his exams because of school fees issue. George told me to advise him on whether he should step down to 100 level. I acknowledged the challenges he presented to and encouraged him to take the path that would enable him to graduate with knowledge and skills. As I speak to you this evening, George has written officially to his university and has stepped down to 100 level. George took this decision because he wanted to graduate with knowledge and skills not just a certificate. What is your own decision? The knowledge and skills or the certificate? I urge you, the student, to choose knowledge and skills over certificate. This choice will give you peace of mind. Because peace is an important index of life. Our society needs peace to continue to exist. Your acquisition of knowledge and skills will develop you into a contributing member of the society. And if you and I do our work competently, our world would be predisposed to peace.

I wish you dear student a great learning experience as I continue to pray: let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

Feel free to share your stories of peace with me. My phone number is 0806 561 3687. On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Leadership for Peace: The Story of Becky and Patience

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the grace to become leaders for peace. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will discuss leadership for peace.

Becky and Patience are neighbors and attend the same primary school. They are both 9 years. One day a quarrel started between them. Patience is very influential hence has lots of friends. What seems to be a child's play escalated into a fierce ~~enmity~~ ~~enmity~~ and a war. However both girls have a classmate and their friend who is neutral on the quarrel, called Ruth. During school hours, the girls would go to the rest room corridor to fight, normally after having hooked themselves on the colar for a very longtime, while Ruth looks on and also intimates them whenever a pupil or a teacher is passing or coming to use the restroom. After school, Becky and Patience including some Patience's friends goes home together, but would stop beside their house, where the hooking continues, they would hook themselves for close to 20 to 30 minutes, before the real physical combat starts. Their neighborhood was a developing estate, so people don't pass by that often, so the two girls would fight, while Becky's younger siblings, Patience friends, Patience's younger sister and Ruth watches. So these girls keeps fighting until they either gets tired or someone passes by to separate them. This continued as days turned into weeks, and weeks into months.

One day, Patience' dad called Becky and her siblings to help him gather stones around, so he can

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use it to fill a pot hole on their street. On arriving to school the next day, Patience did not hesitate to remind Becky that she shouldn't think that they have reconciled simply because they worked together with her dad, and that besides the road is for public use and not her dad's, hence the bickering continued.

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Then one day, their teacher happened to pass by while the two were fighting, and called them in school the next day. There, their peace story started. To be frank, these girls have been meaning to stop these quarrel, but feared that she would be termed a weakling, so they both wanted to prove their strength to their friends who watched them fight. So their teacher didn't find it hard in restoring peace between them, from thence, they became best of friends. The next academic session, they both entered primary 5, and were eligible to sit for the federal common entrance into federal government colleges. Patience parents bought the exam form for her, while Becky didn't. So Patience sat for the exam, and passed well, but was sad that she will be leaving Becky behind, so she pleaded with her teacher to allow her tell her parents about her results herself. But instead, Patience lied to her parents that she didn't pass the exam, and promised to work harder next time. So the two friends continued their friendship and company.

The next academic year, they both sat for state common entrance examination, passed so well, which qualified them to sit for interview into the –state model school. But the result of the interview took so much time to be released. Becky's parents became so worried, and therefore decided to register her in another secondary school, instead of waiting endlessly for the interviews result. When Patience heard it, she was so sad and had to climb the security wall, to see Becky in the school uniform to believe it. Becky explained to Patience that she wasn't able to convince her parents otherwise, but promised to sit for change of school exam in the next academic session. So they continued being the best of friends although they attended different schools.

Then something happened, something beyond their powers, something they can't stop even if they tried. They were to be separated! Patience's family were moving out of the estate. Both friends didn't have mobile phones; in fact phones weren't rampant, only few people have it. They both cried their eyes out on the day they were to move out. To cut the story short, Becky later applied for and sat for the change of school, she passed. But as she was writing into the school, Patience was writing change of school out of the school to federal girls government college which her parents have always wanted. So they never attended the same school again. But with the advent of ICT, they have both reunited, been to each other houses, and maintained good and cordial relationship.

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Presently Patience is in her final year studying civil engineering in Federal University of Technology Owerri, while Becky is also in her final year studying I.R.E in GOU.

May the peace of God be with you. Feel free to share your stories of peace with me by phone 0806 561 3687 or visiting me at my office at Godfrey Okoye University Enugu. Let there be

peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Respect for Cultures and Traditions: A Means to Peaceful Co-Existence by Chidiebere Njoku

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SPEAKING OUT FOR OUR GIRLS, EDUCATION AND OUR NATION

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This morning as I was driving to my work place, GO University, I kept reflecting on what educational institutions (Ministry of Education, primary schools, secondary schools, colleges of education, polytechnics, universities, etc.) are doing in response to the Boko Haram insurgency and especially the abduction of our girls. I wondered why we are not in the fore front of engaging in interventions to ameliorate the impact of Boko Haram in Nigeria. When I learned that the founder of Boko Haram, Yusuf, had a university degree, I felt deep pain and wondered about the type of education he received. I recalled my Vice Chancellor's preferred definition of education that says Education is a system which makes human beings out of animals; I began to question myself as to whether the education we give here in our country, Nigeria, is capable of producing this result. Can we honestly say that we teach our students in a manner that helps them to develop positive principles of life? Can we say that we model and teach academic and moral values to our students? If young people come to us with animalistic behaviours, are we capable

of forming them into human beings? These are difficult questions all educational institutions must answer in this time of great violent challenges in our country. We must engage in deep reflection about these issues, tell ourselves the truth, generate ways of solving the problems we have in our universities and implement the solutions.

We must urgently join the effort for eradicating violence in our country. We must speak for peace and teach peace. We must think about our girls who were abducted from their school. We must know that Boko Haram is a threat to education and do something about it. We cannot fold our hands like unconcerned citizens. The abduction of our girls is the climax of Boko Haram's violence towards education and we must do something positive to help the Boko Haram members know that education is an essential part of our life that makes us to better understand God (Allah) and relate with the people God created in a loving humane way.

When I viewed and had the statement of the Boko Haram leader, I couldn't help feeling empathy for them as I saw a lack of understanding of the religion, Islam. I saw people who have been brainwashed into a way of life that is a threat to their own very existence. I saw people who do not know how to put their skills to good use. I saw people who would rather kill than heal people who don't know what to do with their lives. I saw people who have developed addiction to violence – stealing, torturing, killing and burning down houses. I saw people who looked like animals. I saw a complete lack of education and reasoning.

Having gone through a thicket of feelings, I began to shake because I know that animals don't know how to treat species that are different from theirs. I shake because girls – vulnerable young women are in the hands of men who appear barbaric and malicious. I shake because the girls are outnumbered by these men.

I condemn this violence. I condemn this act of abducting our girls and boldly claiming responsibility for the job and threatening to sell them off as slaves. This is the greatest height of inhumanity. I condemn this way of life that makes supposedly human persons to act like animals. This level of ignorance is a great danger to the entire human race. May God save us! Good education can help us to surmount these types of challenges in our country.

I encourage all our educational institutions to take actions that says No to Boko Haram. Let us say No to this dehumanization. Let us rise up to our educational mandate and collaboratively work for the return of our girls and the glory/fruits (excellence in character and learning) of education in our country.

In engaging the Boko Haram challenge, we must not allow the Boko Haram group to mislead us. We must ensure that we do not perceive the Islamic religion in Nigeria as a terrorist group. We must continue to distinguish between the religion itself and fundamentalist or radical groups. Christians might consider partnering with progressive Islamic scholars for the purpose of espousing the positive tenets of the religion that are consistent with the realities of life and exposing the actions and ideas that do not support peace and prosperity of our nation. Let all educational institutions rise up and join hands in bringing our girls back.

I cry out to the Heavens for support on this and beg God to visit this Boko Haram group the way he visited Saul and transformed him to Paul, his instrument of evangelization. I pray that God will visit each of these people and transform them all. For our girls, I pray that God will protect

them and bring them back to us. For ourselves, I pray that we may be emboldened to stand up for education and for the return of our abducted girls, daughters and sisters. May God help us in this endeavor.

Written by Sr. Mary Gloria C. Njoku (Godfrey Okoye University Enugu)

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the grace to develop respect for the culture and traditions of other people. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will discuss respect for cultures and traditions as a means to peaceful co-existence. The story I am sharing with you was written by Chidiebere Njoku.

What inspires us to seek for peace? Why do we want to live in peace? Is it because of our natural disposition for peace? Is it our ability to see beyond the present? Maybe it is because we want to prosper. We want to be free. It can also be that the opposite of peace is evil and it leaves a bad taste in our mouths. Or it can simply be the fact that we have no other alternative.

Peace is what makes our world and the people in it free. Free of nepotism, free of corruption, free of injustice, free of violence, free of enmity and free of wars. Much progress is made in an atmosphere of peace. Countries, states, cities, and towns grow and perform better when there is cohesion, tolerance, understanding, respect and friendship among citizens. Boulding says that "by drawing on our own life experience, with a little help on how to make the linkages, we can begin to map the outlines of the emerging world community with all its diversity and challenge." In addition, the Hague Agenda (1999:13) asserts that "in order to combat the culture of violence that pervades our society, the coming generation deserves a radically different education- one that does not glorify war but educates for peace, non violence and international cooperation." Peace education according to Freire, 2006 is an instrument for the conversion of people from violence to a peace through a process of conscientization. Peace is what everyone seems to seek even though most times, we want to throw caution to the wind and match words with words, fires with fires, bullets with bullets, blood with blood, an eye for an eye. We want to get even because maybe our heart, mind and body wants that kind of immediate justice.

To understand more on why we should seek for peace, there is need to get to the root of discord, enmity, crisis, violence and wars. One of the causes is the disregard of the cultures, beliefs, values and traditions of others.

Culture is the shared knowledge and plans created by a group of people for perceiving, interpreting, expressing and responding to the social realities among them (Lederach, 1995:9).

A Cultural Policy for Nigeria, 1988, defines culture as:

The totality of the way of life evolved by a people in their attempts to meet the challenge of living in their environment, which gives order and meaning to their social, political, economic, aesthetic and religious norms and modes of organization thus distinguishing a people from their neighbours. (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1988:5)

In summation of the above definitions, culture seeks to answer the who, why, what, where and how of a group of people. Who are we? Why do we act the way we do? Why are we here? What makes us different? Where did we come from? Where do we belong? Where are we going? How will we succeed? Culture simply is the way of living. Traditions are values, beliefs, rules and behavior patterns that are shared by a group and passed on from generation to generation as part

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of the socialization process. (Hunter and Whitten, 1976:391).

It is the way of wisdom from the ancestors holding forever and linking it with the present and the future (Okafor and Emeka, 1994:66).

Tradition from these definitions involves beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviors passed down by ancestors. For instance, the Igbos of the South Eastern part of Nigeria have the breaking of kolanut tradition, The Kalabari people in the South South part of Nigeria hate bloodshed of any kind for whatever purpose and the abhor witchcraft and maltreatment of children. The Yoruba people in the South West have a tradition in which people prostrate when greeting their elders. The stories of *Enwe-Imo-Awka* were intended to explain why the Awka people in the South East revere Monkeys. The Tradition teaches that the Monkey saved Awka people from invaders. The traditional Hausa religion has *Bori* which contains 99 elemental spirits and the Igbo traditional religion has a number of gods and goddesses, *alusi* or nature spirit, *chukwu abiama* the god of creation as well as guardian forces – *chi*.

Every country, state, ethnicity, tribe, town, village and kindred hold their traditions and cultures in high esteem and are ready to die protecting it. Some have severe punishment meted out to people whether strangers or not for the disregard of their cultures and traditions. It is important for everyone to be respectful of other people's cultures and traditions, especially those that are not essentially evil.

Chidiebere Njoku told me a story of her experience with her fellow corp members when they were serving in Ringim Emirate of Jigawa State.

Ringim 2009

I was going to the market after Sunday Mass to buy foodstuffs for the new week. The market was buzzing with traders and buyers, there were many Corp members like me who also came to purchase food stuffs. Then suddenly there was a change in the air, I could smell danger very close to me. Hausa traders were shouting and making angry gestures towards one of us, from the little I could understand in Hausa Language, I surmised that they wanted to beat her up because she was dressed like a harlot which according to them was against their culture.

There were overheated arguments here and there, and you could see signs of fears in the faces of all the youth Corp members in the Ringim market. I started edging away towards the entrance of the market, getting ready to run for my dear life. I noticed then that an elderly trader was trying to calm them down. I nearly jumped out of my skin when he called me to come closer. He informed me that, he begged his fellow traders to have mercy on the Cofa (Corper) as they call us, because she is new to town and lacks knowledge of their way of dressing. He pointed out many of the female Corpers who according to their standards were dressed well and begged me to help educate others to stop dressing indecently to public places.

Most of the youth Corp members on their way home were astonished on why the Lady was dressed like that after the warnings and advices we were given in the camp before our postings. I had thought that the matter ended there in the market but it was not meant to be as the youths of the village stormed the Corpers Lodge to give the female Corpers serious warning on their mode of dressing.

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It could have been another story if the elderly trader had not intervened and brokered peace. Who knows how many Corpers could have been maimed in the market that day because of the actions of one of them.

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It is in the interest of peace that we should learn to tolerate and respect the cultures of others because flaunting and taunting the traditions, beliefs and cultures of others may often lead to discord, violence and sometimes war. There is need to remember that we should behave like the Romans while we are in Rome. It is not the loss of identity rather it is a sign of respect, understanding and tolerance of other people's ways of life.

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Violence, crisis, and wars sets nations backward because no matter the reason a nation goes to war, it will come out of it scarred for life. A nation may come out victorious but its citizens will still be relieving the trauma for many years to come.

Peace is what we all need, what we should seek, what we should preach, what we should act, what we should eat, what we should live. Peace does not make us weak rather it makes us strong. United we stand and divided we fall. Let us all give peace its place in our lives, families, towns, villages, tribes, states, and nations. We can't afford to be caged by crisis, violence and war, they are ill-wind that blows no one good.

I urge you today to take a stand for respecting the cultures and traditions of people that are not essentially evil. When the cultures and traditions are evil, use dialogue and other peaceful friendly approaches to state your position. Try and put yourself in the position of the culture and adherents of such cultures and traditions. If you were born into a similar context, you might act in a similar way. Remember Saul of the Bible, because he was a strong adherent to the Jewish traditions and customs, he fought zealously to defend the traditions of his people. It was only when he encountered Jesus and the spirit of the Christian belief that he learned that there could be another way to profess belief in God. And as you know, when he embraced the Christian faith, he did so boldly and left a legacy for all of us. So I pray you to respect other people's cultures and traditions when they are not essentially evil. And if indeed they are evil, be empathetic in your dealings with them. Pray for them that the God of heaven, the Jesus we follow may meet them like he met Saul and bring them to his fold.

My dear ~~listener~~listener, I am hopeful that you will take a position for respecting other people's culture and traditions this day in order to promote peace. Remember that you can reach me with your comments and stories of peace through my phone 0806 561 3687. May the God of peace bless us with peace as I continue to pray; Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

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On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

Leadership for Peace 2

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the grace to become leaders for peace. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will discuss leadership for peace.

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We have some leaders that we can reckon with when we think about leadership for peace. Examples include Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr., Pope John Paul II, Mother Theresa of Calcuta, Ghandi. Nelson Mandela distinguished himself as a person of peace who refused to pay back those who colonized them and institutionalized apartheid with a continuation of the "monster" they created but instead chose to promote reconciliation of people of African and European descent. Martin Luther King Jr. devoted his life to the quest for freedom of African Americans. He inspired hope in the people of the United States with his speech, "I have a Dream." Pope John Paul II broke several barriers in his lifetime. He visited many countries urging them to respect people of all colours, languages, cultures and racial profiles. He exemplified social justice in his life and he visited and forgave the young man who shot him. Mother Theresa of Calcuta promoted social responsibility and peace by making herself available to serve the downtrodden of the society. Her life consisted of "Making People Beautiful for God." Ghandi prayed, fasted and suffered to bring his people out of distress. He protested against their oppressors peacefully.

These leaders are among outstanding individuals considered influential leaders. There are many people who exhibit the characteristics exemplified in these types of leaders but circumstances have largely prevented them from being visible to us. However, most of us do not have the compendium of skills and mastery required for good leadership. Some of us have great skills and achievement profiles but are plagued by narcissism. They have ~~big egos that most often make~~big egos that most often make it difficult for them to listen to opinions that are contrary to their views and rather dispose them to pay attention to only information that supports their own opinion, image and ideas. Their bloated ego propels them to take all the space and leave none for others to demonstrate their own leadership capacity. These narcissistic leaders suffer from inadequate self esteem and self-awareness (Njoku, 2011).

In contrast to leaders with narcissistic personality, those who have a healthy sense of self understand the importance of giving other people opportunity to demonstrate their leadership potentials. They know that no one is an embodiment of all knowledge, they know what they are good at and therefore, they fill-up some leadership space with other people who will complement their skills. It is not unusual to see that the team members may have diverse and critical view points.

Given what we know today about development, it is clear that no country, institution or sector can manage our global challenges and development alone. Successful development is dependent on collaboration with varied segments of people, institutions and nations. Collaboration requires relationship building with both people who are like-minded and those with contrasting views. To be successful in relationship building and networking, collaborative leaders reach out to other people as peers rather than subordinates (Andrews et al 2010). We need leaders who will fill-up the leadership space with those who complement their skills in other to maximize development. When a leader fills the space with only people whose views match theirs, they have indeed

created a big loophole that could bring about the collapse of the system they are leading. Let me tell you more about the image of the peaceful leader.

The fundamentalist mindset of the perceived image of 'a peaceful leader' is one that has been called the 'Superhuman'. The 'brave' individual is typically male or an 'odd' woman and located at the top of an imaginary pyramid. He or she accomplishes exceptional things because of his or her exceptional abilities and skills.

Given the emphasis on the individual and her/his exceptional abilities, it is not surprising that there are many parallel lists of key characteristics or 'traits' that, when encountered together in one individual, tend to make that person quite exceptional. Some of the important talents are not only intelligence but also creativity; emotional intelligence and strong interpersonal skills which includes strong communication skills; self-confidence and courage; self-knowledge and authenticity; and a great capacity to adapt.

Core things that such exceptional individuals do and do very well are: grasping the broader picture (a holistic perspective or 'organizations sensitivity') and making sense of it; building broad networks of relationships within and across institutions of varied differences; creating a fascinating and captivating vision of the future, and managing the various tasks to achieve that vision, often in inventive ways.

It has been understood that 'peaceful leadership' largely begins and takes off in 'small group' situations, maybe a team of close advisors, a Cabinet, or an informal or formal setting with 'key people' from other institutions. Yet peaceful leadership also involves the ability to connect to and communicate directly with large crowds and audiences. In both situations, verbal and non-verbal communication skills are very important.

A distinction tends to be made between 'transformational' and 'transactional' leadership. 'Transformational' leaders are those that seek to go beyond the status quo and business-as-usual, and appeal to the higher motivations of their followers i.e. their ability to see beyond their immediate self-interest and mobilize for a greater common good. It is sometimes argued that 'transformational' leaders largely use 'soft power' i.e. the art of persuasion. 'Transactional' leaders by contrast stay within the confines of the current situation, tend to appeal to more basic motivations such as greed, fear and even hatred, and largely use 'hard power' i.e. the (threat of) rewards and punishment (Koenraad, 2012).

A distinction can be made between a peaceful leader's image and his aura. The 'image' is the supposed trait people want to see while the aura is the actual impression made on the followers. While a leader is portrayed as a functional operator, using the rules and formal authority to keep institutions going, they can be contrasted with 'Peaceful leaders' who aspire to often times initiate mutual effective change, and who rely on vision, values and trust more than the rule of the book.

There are also peaceful leaders and conventional leaders. The conventional leader is one seen as an exceptional individual. They are exceptional in that they manage to mobilize significant numbers of people to achieve or try to achieve exceptional –and positive– things. We believe

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they can do this because they have exceptional skills. Great 'business' leaders build very successful businesses more or less from scratch, or are applauded because they manage to turn around a failing company. Bill Gates for Microsoft, Steve Jobs for Apple, Jack Welch for General Electric and Lee Iacocca, who revived the Chrysler Company in the 1980s. Nandan Nilekani, CEO of Infosys Technologies Ltd. and Mo Ibrahim, founder of Celtel and creator of the Mo Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership, are other outstanding names. The peaceful leader or true leader is seen to embody and carry both the conventional and peaceful skills of a supervisor or guide. Leadership for peace encompasses a willingness to explore the implications of ones actions and select options that institutionalize peace.

I started my story today with mentioning examples of leaders who exemplified peace. The likes of Nelson Mandela distinguished himself as a person of peace who refused to pay back those who colonized them and institutionalized apartheid with a continuation of the "monster" they created but instead chose to promote reconciliation of people of African and European descent. Martin Luther King Jnr. devoted his life to the quest for freedom of African Americans. He inspired hope in the people of the United States with his speech, "I have a Dream." Pope John Paul II broke several barriers in his lifetime. He visited many countries urging them to respect people of all colours, languages, cultures and racial profiles. He exemplified social justice in his life and he visited and forgave the young man who shot him. Mother Theresa of Calcutta promoted social responsibility and peace by making herself available to serve the downtrodden of the society. Her life consisted of "Making People Beautiful for God." Ghandi prayed, fasted and suffered to bring his people out of distress. He protested against their oppressors peacefully.

I want you to remember that you have what it takes to be a Nelson Mandela, a Martin Luther King Jnr., a Pope John Paul the second, a Mother Theresa of Calcutta and a Ghandi of our time. If it is possible for you, find the biographies or stories of these individuals and read them. You would find out that they were ordinary people like you and me who accomplished great peaceful actions in their lives. I would like you to take a moment and reflect on your own attributes. Would you say that you a peaceful leader or rather a person who embraces leadership for peace. I am hundred percent sure that there is someone somewhere who would be thinking that this story is for those in high or political offices. Hello my dear, my story on leadership for peace is for all of us ordinary people, you and me. It concerns you the husband and father of the house, it concerns you the wife and mother of the house, it is for you the child in the house, it is for you the office clerk, sales lady, salesman, secretary, computer operator, accountant, manager and chief executive officer. It is for you student, tutor, lecturer and professor. It is for you and me. Please join me as I take a stand to support leadership for peace. To work on my transformation into a leader for peace; to pray for God's light and strength to embody peace in my life activities.

May the peace of God be with you. Feel free to share your stories of peace with me by phone 0806 561 3687 or visiting me at my office at Godfrey Okoye University Enugu. Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Developing a Culture of Blessing Others

Good evening my dear listener. We pray today for the grace to develop a culture of blessing other people. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will discuss developing a culture of blessing others and moving away from the use of back to sender and cursing people.

Today my dear listener I wish to speak on my personal spirituality as it concerns the use of back to sender and cursing other people. First I will tell you about the psychological view. I have noticed that our culture has moved into the era of using the statement, "back to sender" as a way to give back evil to other people. The behaviour of cursing other people have been around for ages and is still with us. Honestly my dear, I have developed a psychology of cursing people and using back to sender that explains why we have a lot of evil and oppressive or maladaptive behaviours in our world. This my psychological viewpoint understands that when parents curse their children, leaders curse their followers, priests curse their parishioners, children curse their parents, co-workers curse their fellow workers, teachers curse their students, consumers curse sellers and so on, they are cursing their society. This is because those who receive the curses are members of the society and if they become accursed persons, as members of the same society, every member would share in one way or the other in the challenges associated with the curse. Use of back to sender produces similar effect. In the context of the psychology I explained above, imagine a society that curses people and uses the back to sender slogan. What will this society be? Won't it appear accursed? Think about this the next time you want to curse somebody or use the back to sender slogan.

Now about my spirituality of managing frustration and oppressive behaviours from other people. I have groomed myself by the special grace of God to bless those who curse me or perpetuate one type of evil or another against me. I have never used the back to sender slogan and its like. I pray that God will sustain this grace in me. The main reason that I have refused to use the back to sender slogan is because I have reflected on the slogan and found out that it represents the traditional slogan that says Egbe bere, Ugo bere, nke si be ya ebela nku kwa ya. Look at it this way, if someone has concocted evil against you and you now send the evil back to them through invocation of back to sender, you have indeed displayed similar evil behaviour like the original sender. In place of back to sender, you can pray to God to destroy every evil fashioned against you and pray for the conversion of the instigators and perpetrators of the evil. It will not take anything away from you to do this. rather, you will become transformed into an individual for peace. And then you will be living out the injunctions of Jesus in Matt 5: 33-37, *You have also heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." But now I tell you: do not take revenge on someone who wrongs you. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, let him slap your left cheek too. And if someone takes you to court to sue you for your shirt, let him have your coat as well. And if one of the occupation troops forces you to carry his pack one kilometre, carry it two kilometres. When someone asks you for something, give it to him; when someone wants to borrow something, lend it to him.*

You have heard that it was said, 'Love your friends, hate your enemies.' But now I tell you: love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may become the children of your father in heaven. For he makes his sun to shine on bad and good people alike, and gives rain to those who do good and to those who do evil. Why should God reward you if you love only the

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people who love you? Even the tax collectors do that! And if you speak only to friends, have you done anything out of the ordinary? Even the pagans do that! You must be perfect - just as your Father in heaven is perfect!

You also know that my dear that we Christians have agreed that it is better for us to modify the original Egbe bere, Ugo bere, nke si be ya ebela nku kwa ya to read Egbe bere, Ugo bere, nke si be ya ebela ya gosi ya ebe o ga ebe. Please my dear I implore you today to work away from the use of back to sender slogan. Here is one of the ways I pray to cover evil challenges: Dear Lord I pray for all those who are inspiring, planning or executing evil against me this day. May it please you to bless them so that they may focus on their blessing and turn away their faces and mind from me. Do thou grant them true conversion to turn away from evil and become your instrument of peace. This one of the versions of the type of prayers I say in recognition of the existence of individuals who sometimes instigate evil against other human beings. The word evil that I use here encompasses things like malicious criticism, slander, calumny, playing intrigues, instigating downfall of others, poisoning, assassination, murder, and all other forms of oppression.

My dear listener I implore you today to start blessing people instead of cursing them no matter what the circumstances might be. In the light of the psychology of back to sender and curses that I explained at the beginning of this story, imagine what our homes, churches, work places, kindreds, clans, villages, states and nation would be if you and I develop the culture of blessing people and moving away from back to sender and cursing others. Don't you think that there would be aura of blessing everywhere? Don't you love the feeling of blessings in the air? I love it myself. I hope you love it too. Then let put heads and hands together in working to install a culture of blessing our husband, wife, child, coworker, parents, friends, leaders, followers, students, teachers, and even the person we consider our enemy. Remember Matthew 5: 33-37.

In every special way, I am using this media to plead with my dear listener, the religious leader, ordained priest and pastor, bishop and others to make the blessing of the people your personal agenda. And avoid cursing people. No matter how mean or evil the behaviour of the person may be, please I beg you to forgive and bless him or her. I am praying for you to accomplish this important goal for the development of the Christendom and our society in general.

An now my dear, I must end my story of the day with blessing you. May God bless you! May God protect you! may God grant you the grace to bless other people! I pray for those who are inspiring, planning or executing evil against you this day. May it please God to bless them so that they may focus on their blessing and turn away their faces and mind from you and may God grant them true conversion. May the peace of God be with you. Amen.

Remember that you are free to share your stories of peace with me by phone 0806 561 3687 or visiting me at my office at Godfrey Okoye University Enugu. Join me in praying let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh and the Studio Manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again the same time next week for another edition of the programme, peace.

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Living a Peaceful Life: The Wisdom in Cocoa Drink

Good evening dear listener. We continue to pray for the grace to live simply, love generously, care deeply and live peacefully. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will tell you another story we shared at our 4th Youth Peace Conference.

As I informed you two weeks ago, we shared many stories at the conference; stories that enabled us to discuss peace and reflect on ways that we can share peace with others. One of the ideas that was generated at the conference was inspired by Comm Godwin Ogenyi, who challenged us to take the peace conference to our communities. The Comm informed us that he would help us to develop the strategies and implement these peace conferences in the communities. We are now trying to see how we can use the upcoming Christmas period to initiate peace conferences in our communities. I am sure that I will be taking the peace message to my parent's hometown and any other place I might find myself. I encourage you dear listener to join us to champion peace in our communities. If you would like to volunteer to participate in community peace conferences, feel free to join effort with the Youth Peace Conference of Godfrey Okoye University, Enugu. Thank you for continuing to listen to the peace programme.

Now unto the story that I wish to share with you today – the story is titled the wisdom in cocoa drink – this is a story I got from another Reverend Sister who moderated a programme for my congregation, the Daughters of Divine Love, some years ago. The story reads:

A group of graduates, well established in their careers were talking at a reunion and decided to go and visit their old university professor, who has now retired. During their visit, the conversation turned to complaints about stress in their work and lives.

Offering his guests hot cocoa drink, the professor went into the kitchen and returned with a large pot of hot cocoa drink and an assortment of cups - porcelain, glass, crystal, stainless steel, plastic, some plain looking, some expensive, some exquisite - telling them to help themselves to the hot cocoa drink. When they all had a cup of hot cocoa in hand, the professor said: Notice that all the nice looking, expensive cups were taken, leaving behind the plain and cheap ones. While it is normal for you to want only the best for yourselves, that is the source of your problems and stress.

The cup that you are drinking from adds nothing to the quality of the hot cocoa drink. In most cases it is just more expensive and in some cases even hides what we drink. What all of you really wanted was hot cocoa, not the cup; but you consciously went for the best cups. And then you began eyeing each other's cups. Now consider this. Life is the hot cocoa, your job, money and position in society are the cups. They are just tools to hold and contain life. The cup you have does not define, nor change the quality of life you have. Sometimes, by concentrating only on the cup, we fail to enjoy the hot cocoa God has provided us. God makes the cocoa, humans

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choose the cup. The happiest people don't have the best of everything. They just make the best of everything that they have. Live simply, love generously. Care deeply. Speak kindly and enjoy your hot cocoa.

This story of hot cocoa drinks that the type of cups the guests choose to use to drink the cocoa speaks to you and I. Life is more important than other things but sometimes we forget life and focus on jobs, money, power and their likes. By the way my dear listeners, a few months ago, I was at a conference at another part of our globe where we were discussing priorities in life. At this conference, we were given a list to prioritize. At the end of the event, we discovered that some people put their jobs, power, money, influence and other things ahead of life. For such individuals we were informed, life is just a thing that can be wasted anytime and anywhere without feelings of remorse.

I believe that you my listener values life and supports the need for peace to support our life. I believe that you might be open to live simply, love generously and care deeply as recommended by the retired professor.

You see, we can choose to have the best of jobs, acquire wealth and power. It is okay to aspire for greater things. But we must be aware that the pursuit of these things does not guarantee happiness and peace. Many people have all these things working for them and yet they are very unhappy and they lack peace. It is possible to have these things and still be a happy and peaceful person. The key to the pathway to happiness and peace or unhappiness and unrest is in how you acquire your jobs, wealth and power. If you get these things through playing intrigues, undermining other people's effort, stealing, cheating, killing and other forms of injustice, your life pattern will continue to replay these behaviours and you might be more likely to continue to hatch funny unhappy ways of continuing to stay on top with your job, wealth and power. You might spend your entire life in a cycle of these behaviours that breed unhappiness and lack of peace.

On the other hand, if you live simply, love generously and care deeply, you can attain all of these things and still have peace. Remember the story of Mother Teresa I shared last week. Although she was a small woman, her life of generosity touched lives and gave her a level of influence in our world that is uncontended. But she attained power by doing small acts of charity that became big acts of charity, what she calls something beautiful for God.

I encourage you my dear listener to choose peace in all your endeavours. This world we know is not our home. There is no need for us to spend our time on building stress, unhappiness and lack of peace through our actions. I believe that when we choose to live simply, love generously and care deeply, miracles occur in our lives each day. Those miracles could be miracles of friendships, they could also be miracles of unexpected promotions and rise in power. I am a living testimony of choosing this pattern of life. I would like you to become a living testimony too.

Sit back this evening, reflect on how you have been pursuing jobs, wealth and power. If it does not appear peaceful, if it is the way of intrigues, edging out other people, poisoning others, blackmailing, gossiping, stealing, modern day 419, murder, snatching things that belong to other

people and destroying the reputation of others. Tell yourself the truth and begin a new path. It is not too late. Your cocoa is available for you, just choose the cup you want and take the hot cocoa.

If you are pursuing your job, wealth and power with peace and justice, living simply, loving generously and caring deeply, peace will never depart from your life. You will experience a relaxed mind in the midst of worldly chaos and you will indeed be a living testimony of God's goodness. I encourage you to keep up the good work. I look forward to meeting you someday so that we can share the stories of our lives. Until then, let there be peace on earth let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh, and the studio manager, Ifeanyi Ani, I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again same time next week for another edition of the programme, Peace.

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The Story of Mother Theresa of Calcuta

Good evening dear listener. We continue to pray for peace. In this edition of the programme, peace, I will tell you the story of Mother Teresa of Calcuta as told by Jena who considers Mother Teresa her hero

Mother Teresa was a human cure for all people. Her words were healing medicines to the poor, sick and dying. Mother Teresa was a strong-hearted woman driven by the love of God. She loved and cared for the people that others discarded. Many of these people had a disease called Leprosy. Lepers, or people who had Leprosy, were unwanted and were only noticed when people tried to stay away from them. Mother Teresa followed God and tried her best to heal people's wounds. Mother Teresa was a unique person. Her actions were inspirational. When Mother Teresa was near, you could feel her love seeping into your heart. Mother Teresa is my hero. I chose Mother Teresa because she has touched our world in ways I have always dreamed of. I also chose her because she had unique qualities and was down to earth.

Mother Teresa accomplished many things in her life. She was a hard-working, internationally recognized woman but was also very humble. In 1950, Mother Teresa started the Missionaries of Charity. Before she started the Missionaries of Charity, she took her vows and joined the Order of Loreto. During the time she resided at the convent of the Loreto sisters, she became the principal of a school. Although she was a nun and had many tasks, she felt that she was not doing enough to help the poor. It was in 1946 that she received another call from God; this call told her that she was to leave the convent, go out and help the poor, while living among them. She knew this was what God truly wanted of her. After remaining with the Order of Loretos for about seventeen years, the time had come for her to recognize that what she was doing was not enough to satisfy herself, nor God. She left the Loreto Convent and went to a medical school to train to learn how to help aid the poor people who lived on the streets. After about three months of training at the Medical Missionary Sisters at Patna, she left to live among the poor of Calcutta. Before long, other women joined her efforts. That is when she started the Missionaries of Charity. The Missionaries of Charity was a group of religious leaders who took the sick and dying off the streets. Since the hospitals would not take the poor in, Mother Teresa asked permission to use back rooms of a former temple. In the temple, Mother Teresa and other nuns that she worked with tried to nurse the dying people back to health. Mother Teresa also took the

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little poor children of Calcutta off the streets, brought them to a little park, and became their schoolteacher.

Mother Teresa was inspired by her parents to do all she did in her life. Her parents taught her to give to charity and to help the poor. One of the things she always remembered her father saying was never take a morsel of food that you are not prepared to share with others. This is how she chose to live her life- never thinking about herself but always thinking about what she could do for others in the name of Jesus. She brought dignity to the sick and dying. She helped them pass their remaining days of life with hope.

Mother Teresa also won over fifteen awards. One of those awards was the Nobel Peace Prize. She was given this award in 1979 and accepted the award in Oslo, Norway. I think Mother Teresa highly deserved this award because she gave up a good life to help poor people. She also deserved this award because it made people aware of the poverty in the world and what she was doing to lessen it.

To me a hero isn't only someone who saves people's lives but is someone who loves his neighbor as himself and goes out of his way to do something special for his fellow human. A hero is someone who sees through negative things and follows what he believes in, even if it means he has to jeopardize his life. A hero has a huge heart and a wise mind. To me, a hero is Mother Teresa.

When I read this story, the paragraph that struck me deeply was: Mother Teresa was inspired by her parents to do all she did in her life. Her parents taught her to give to charity and to help the poor. One of the things she always remembered her father saying was never take a morsel of food that you are not prepared to share with others. This is how she chose to live her life- never thinking about herself but always thinking about what she could do for others in the name of Jesus. She brought dignity to the sick and dying. She helped them pass their remaining days of life with hope.

I reflected on this paragraph, wondering how Mother Teresa's parents came to the point of teaching their child to never take a bread that she is not prepared to share with other and to give to charity. This reminds us that parents' and parental instructions could be one of the keys to social justice and peace. If parents teach their children peaceful attributes, they will grow up peaceful. My siblings and I have always wondered about the personality of our father in terms of his willingness to forgive and let go of anything done to him. We wondered why he allows people to cheat him from time to time. But lately, we have found that we have imbibed our father's behavior of forgiving offenses easily and enduring the cheating behavior of certain persons. It became clear to us that parental attributes rub off on their children. Although peer influence can affect adolescents, if parents raise their children well, the effect of peer influence will be mediated by parental guidance.

Dear listener, the parent, take your role seriously and model peaceful attributes to your children. Let the children discover that fighting is not the only way of dealing with life challenges or scrambling for scarce resources. Open their hearts to remember to share their knowledge, food and ideas with other people. Teach them family oriented behavior and they will never depart

from the path you have laid for them. Children need to feel a sense of belonging in the family in order to develop attachment towards their parents and siblings. If you want your children to grow up into adult persons who care about one another and other people show them that you care for each of them. Avoid "scapegoating" anyone of them. Young people are very sensitive to parental behavior of comparison. When they notice that they are not the preferred child or valued as much as other children, they might develop feelings of anger, jealousy and envy. These feelings precede conflict in the family and inability to respect other people.

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Mother Teresa's home training in charity enabled her to understand the connectedness of all humans and enabled her to reach out to the needy and the rejected of the society when she became a consecrated religious woman. I encourage you parents to do your best to raise your children well.

My listener, the young person, you can see that Mother Teresa is a celebrated woman today because of how she lived her life for others. She remembered the good things her parents taught her and guided by the spirit of God she became an instrument of comfort to other people. She felt at home with all types of people, helping them to experience the beauty of living. I encourage us to remember the good things our parents taught us and use them to do good on earth.

May the love of God guide us as we strive to find our giftedness, as we remember the positive guides from our parents, as we do little things for justice here on earth, as we look for, embrace and live peace. Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh, and the studio manager, Ifeanyi Ani, I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again same time next week for another edition of the programme, Peace.

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The Followers' Behaviour: Becoming the Change you want

Good evening dear listener. We pray for peace and unity in our country, Nigeria. In this edition of the programme, peace, I shall discuss being the change you want.

Recall that last Saturday I reflected on the leader for Nigeria. Today, I am continuing that same discussion but focusing on the followers' behaviour.

Have you ever wondered why things are not going well in Nigeria? Why the nation goes from one crisis to another despite the prayers for Nigeria in distress? I have often reflected on the nature of the country, the selfishness espoused by many people, the triumph of evil and corruption and what it might take to get Nigeria to the level of advancement commensurate with the expectation from other African countries. I feel that you and I, the followers need to work on ourselves. As a clinical and community psychologist, I believe that we must become the change we want for us to have a better Nigeria.

Each day that I tune on the radio, TV or check the print media, I am barraged by a lot of information detailing what our leaders ought to do that they are not doing. I sometimes ask myself whether I am doing what I ought to do. I wonder whether you and I are actually doing what we ought to do. Is it possible to have a corrupt or mindless leader where the followers are incorruptible and sensible?

Recall that I reflected on the ethical leader and expectations from such leader. I shared my experience from the field. Having worked in a Nigerian educational organization for the past five years, I am challenged to believe that the cultural milieu or mindset of the average Nigerian in the workforce seems to be primarily centered on personal rather than group goals. It almost feels as though many followers perceive an empathetic, selfless and considerate attitude as weakness. Imagine working with a follower who seeks permission for a three-day off-duty to take care of personal health. You grant the request and four hours or a day later, you get a report from other workers that the follower is busy selling goods, commuting people with motorbike, keke, taxi or bus. In the spirit of empathy, you call the follower to order for engaging in such a dubious behaviour but the employee continues to seek and obtain extra work days off duty with fictitious

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or flimsy excuses. Health matters and death are very serious matters but many followers often do not reflect on the implication of misleading their leaders by lying about such matters in order to obtain some days off.

The most challenging type of work behaviour that takes advantage of the prosocial leader (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999) is that which I have observed among individuals who present themselves for employment. These individuals assure the manager that they know their work and are capable of contributing to the organization's goals but as soon as they are offered employment, they begin to demonstrate their incompetence. In some cases, some of the employees "just" sit around from beginning to end of work day doing nothing and yet, at the end of each month, they receive a salary.

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Another insulting behaviour of some followers in Nigeria is the attitude of self-aggrandizement. You expect that an empathetic, selfless leader will engender selfless attitude among the followers. However, my experience of Nigeria has shown that regardless of the leader's behaviour, many followers continue to seek ways to "fill their pockets," instead of enriching their organization. In fact, I perceive a situation where many people are struggling to get a share of the "national cake" using any available means such as inflating the prices of goods, selling organizational resources, using organizational resources for personal matters, and extorting money from the less privileged.

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It is important to note here that there have been stories of followers who maintain ethical business behaviour whether or not they have leaders who are ethical themselves in Nigeria. I have had the opportunity to experience individuals who are truly hardworking, accountable and responsible. These individuals attend to their work because they are intrinsically motivated to complete their job tasks well. Sometimes, I have heard people asking these types of workers why they have chosen to be exceptional in carrying out their tasks. These exceptional individuals challenge us to become better followers but many write them off as weaklings and thus fail to grasp the message from their exemplary lives.

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Today, I bring the message that we must become the change we want. We must become peaceful if we want peace. If we want our leaders to be peace ambassadors, we too must become peace ambassadors. We must shun all that militate against peaceful disposition. We must support the observance of human rights, free communication among people, and respect for the dignity of all persons. We must practice fraternal charity and safeguard the goods of others. We must attune ourselves to maintain order, follow due process and be just. We must be active participants in instituting environmental safety, sense of community, self control, security and the protection of the basic amenities we currently have. We cannot afford to continue to focus on the "I" alone. Nigeria needs her children to come out on mass and support our collective interest. Regionalism, tribalism, stateism, villagism and their likes are no longer veritable options. Peace transcends the balance of powers between adversaries and minority/majority groups. We need to be united in addressing the needs of our nation. Last Saturday, I asked you to send me your thoughts about the characteristics we need in our next leader. You did so. Thank you. I am compiling the responses you gave and shall present the result to you in our next edition of the programme, peace. For now, I urge you to become the change you want.

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Repeating the words of my friend, Mary Wynne, in my own life, deciding to try to live the change has been a real challenge. I'm not good at it yet, but I am lucky to be surrounded by people who inspire me to seek the peaceful way in difficult times. The values that support conflict, regionalism and nepotism are difficult to ignore – the drive to have more than everyone else, to have status and power, to dominate and control others. Choosing to value people and relationships over objects is extraordinarily difficult because we are immersed in a culture of acquisition and envy. Watching television makes it worse, especially for children, who are drawn into believing that owning something will make them happy. We cannot fill the emptiness inside with more stuff. Only connectedness to others, to the Earth, and to our own spirit can make us full. Each individual person cannot live in isolation. We need stability, peace and unity to advance.

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It helps to make a start – today, right now – together. As we get closer to the election day, I wish that you remember that we must work for peace if we want peace. We must be active participants in the selection of our leaders. We must do our research well. We must also pray to God for him to guide us in our voting. May the good Lord strengthen you as you make the necessary change to live peace. And do continue to say with me, “Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.”

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Leadership Qualities

Good evening dear listener. We pray for the courage to vote freely and peacefully in the forthcoming election. In this edition of the programme, peace, I shall present to you the qualities we want in our leaders as presented by respondents to the questions on leadership qualities. Before I do so, let me take a moment to appreciate you my listener. Last Saturday, I received many calls and texts from you my fans. I was touched by the show of solidarity, love and encouragement. On Sunday, the calls and texts kept pouring in. One listener who heard the programme for the first time came from his state to Enugu just to sight me and collect my peace story. Another listener tracked me down to my university to see me. I feel humbled by your show of appreciation, admiration and encouragement. I thank you most sincerely from my heart. May God bless you with peace and all other legitimate intentions of your heart. May other people show you the same solidarity, encouragement and love you have shown to me. I love you.

Now back to the theme of today's edition of the programme, peace. Recall that I discussed leadership last week. I talked about ethical leaders who exhibit empathy, trustworthiness, selfless attitude, and a focus on collective mission and how they tend to maintain optimal leader-follower relationships. I opined that the ability to master the minds of followers and influence them appropriately would be necessary for the advancement of Nigeria. Leaders must be capable of taking in varied information and solving complex problems effectively and efficiently. I also talked about learning from the examples of Jerry Rawlings, Ghandi, Julius Nyerere, Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King Jnr. Having seen the evil of tribalism/ethnicism, we need a leader who will refuse to accept a system of ethnic divide, a leader who will bring our people to a self-consciousness that promotes unity.

I presented the following definition of peace: Peace connotes the observance of human rights. It is free communication among people, respect for the dignity of persons, the diligent practice of fraternity, and the safeguarding of the goods of persons. Peace is the tranquility of order, the work of justice and the effect of charity. Peace is associated with personal and social identity, sense of community, sense of control, justice, fairness, wellness, environmental safety, security and access to basic amenities such as food and shelter. It is not merely the absence of war and it

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is not limited to equity, equality and the maintenance of a balance of powers between adversaries and minority/majority groups (Njoku, 2014).

I ended the edition with questions I asked you my dear listener to assist me with answering. Now I present to you the responses I received from 71 respondents.

The first question asked: Do you agree that we need a leader who will focus on stabilizing the nation, unsettling ethnic divide and enthusing hope, peace and unity among the people of Nigeria.

67 persons responded yes and four persons said no

The second question asked: What characteristics should the next leader of Nigeria possess?

The top quality indicated by the respondents was Godfearing which was endorsed by 25 persons, the second was honesty/truthfulness with 21 endorsements, having interest of the people was the third quality with 15 endorsements, next was being educated which had 13 endorsements, next was being humble – 12 endorsements, followed by having confidence endorsed 11 times. The next quality was love/peace/unity which received 10 endorsements. Other qualities with less than 10 endorsement, in the order of priority, were purposeful, courageous, creative, free and fair/justice, hardworking, trustworthy, accountable, not biased, incorruptible, transparency, security minded, understanding, optimism, employment conscious, charity, selfless, foresight, coordinated, wisdom and social.

The third question asked: What characteristics should the next leader of your state possess?

Respondents indicated the following

Honesty/truthful was the top quality with 35 endorsements. This was followed by Godfearing with 10 endorsements, then humility with 5 endorsements. Others were having interest of people, being faithful, educated, incorruptible, trustworthy, accountable, good conduct, creative, understanding, good character, energetic, peaceful, social, coordinated, selfless, foresight, wisdom, ability to fulfill manifesto, healthy, transparent

In summary, the qualities you endorsed for our leaders were

Unifying personality

- Godfearing
- honesty/truthfulness
- having interest of the people
- being educated
- humility
- confidence
- love/peace
- purposeful,
- courageous,
- creative,
- free and fair/justice,
- hardworking,
- trustworthy,

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- accountable,
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As you can see, the six top qualities were:

Godfearing, g honesty/truthfulness,
 having interest of the people, g being educated,
 humility, and confidence

Now you know the qualities we want in our leaders. Before we go to the polls next week Saturday, take your time and let these qualities guide you in your voting decision. Remember that many people want a person with a unifying personality. Nigeria needs a leader who will focus on stabilizing the nation, unsettling ethnic divide and enthusing hope and unity among the people of Nigeria. Please take a step in the right direction, vote wisely. Support the peace movement by voting a peaceful person.

Also, plan to maintain peaceful atmosphere and avoid any form of violence. Do not allow others to instill fear into you. Some individuals are speculating violence and crisis post election if unfavourable. I enjoin you to stay calm and peaceful. Fear is crippling and if you allow yourself to be filled with fear, you might find it difficult to take the right action. You might also find yourself in the fight/flight mode which will in turn task your endocrine and sympathetic nervous system. This mode may put you at risk for emotional and physical health challenges. So I encourage you to stay peaceful despite the negative news some people conjure and present to us daily.

As we get closer to the election day, remember that we must work for peace if we want peace. We must be active participants in the selection of our leaders. We must do our research well. We must pray to God for him to guide us in our voting. May the good Lord bless us with a peaceful election. May the Lord bless us with leaders who have unifying personality. May the good Lord bless us with peace. May you feel peace in your heart and home. And do continue to say with me, "Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me."

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~~Recall that two weeks ago I reflected on the leader for Nigeria. Today, I am continuing that same discussion but focusing on the followers' behavior.~~

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The most challenging type of work behaviour that takes advantage of the prosocial leader (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999) is that which I have observed among individuals who present themselves for employment. These individuals assure the manager that they know their work and are capable of contributing to the organization's goals but as soon as they are offered employment, they begin to demonstrate their incompetence. In some cases, some of the employees "just" sit around from beginning to end of work day doing nothing and yet, at the end of each month, they receive a salary.

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Repeating the words of my friend, Mary Wynne, in my own life, deciding to try to live the change has been a real challenge. I'm not good at it yet, but I am lucky to be surrounded by people who inspire me to seek the peaceful way in difficult times. The values

that support conflict, regionalism and nepotism are difficult to ignore—the drive to have more than everyone else, to have status and power, to dominate and control others. Choosing to value people and relationships over objects is extraordinarily difficult because we are immersed in a culture of acquisition and envy. Watching television makes it worse, especially for children, who are drawn into believing that owning something will make them happy. We cannot fill the emptiness inside with more stuff. Only connectedness to others, to the Earth, and to our own spirit can make us full. Each individual person cannot live in isolation. We need stability, peace and unity to advance.

It helps to make a start—today, right now—together. We have gone to the polls and voted for our president. Well done! We still have to vote for our state leader, the governor. Please remember that we must continue to work for peace if we want peace. We must do our research well. We must also pray to God for him to guide us in our voting the right leader for our state. If you my listener is aspiring to be the leader, work on yourself and aim at allowing God's will to be done. Let it not be a do or die affair. If your mission is to serve your people as you have been saying to us at your campaigns, then you must allow our votes to elect you. But please let peace guide you. Avoid all forms of violence and live peace. May the good Lord strengthen you as you make the necessary change to live peace. And do continue to say with me, "Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me."

If you have a story to share with me, find me on twitter @nmgloria, on phone at 0806 561 3687 or at my office at Godfrey Okoye University Enugu.

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The Real Meaning of Peace: Inner Peace

Good evening dear listener. We continue to pray for peace and unity in our country, Nigeria. In this edition of the programme, peace, I shall discuss a story on the real meaning of peace that I found on the Internet.

There once was a king who offered a prize to the artist who would paint the best picture of peace. Many artists tried. The king looked at all the pictures. But there were only two he really liked, and he had to choose between them.

One picture was of a calm lake. The lake was a perfect mirror for peaceful towering mountains all around it. Overhead was a blue sky with fluffy white clouds. All who saw this picture thought that it was a perfect picture of peace.

The other picture had mountains, too. But these were rugged and bare. Above was an angry sky, from which rain fell and in which lightning played. Down the side of the mountain tumbled a

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foaming waterfall. This did not look peaceful at all.

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But when the king looked closely, he saw behind the waterfall a tiny bush growing in a crack in the rock. In the bush a mother bird had built her nest. There, in the midst of the rush of angry water, sat the mother bird on her nest - in perfect peace.

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Which picture do you think won the prize? The king chose the second picture. Do you know why? "Because," explained the king, "peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. Peace means to be in the midst of all those things and still be calm in your heart. That is the real meaning of peace."

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"Inner peace: a state of mind, body and perhaps soul, a peace within ourselves. People that experience inner peace say that the feeling is not dependent on time, people, place, or any external object or situation, asserting that an individual may experience inner peace even in the midst of war"

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"I believe that the very purpose of life is to be happy. From the very core of our being, we desire contentment. In my own limited experience I have found that the more we care for the happiness of others, the greater is our own sense of well-being. Cultivating a close, warmhearted feeling for others automatically puts the mind at ease. It helps remove whatever fears or insecurities we may have and gives us the strength to cope with any obstacles we encounter. It is the principal source of success in life. Since we are not solely material creatures, it is a mistake to place all our hopes for happiness on external development alone. The key is to develop inner peace." Dalai Lama quotes (Head of the Dge-lugs-pa order of Tibetan Buddhists, 1989 Nobel Peace Prize, b.1935)

My dear I hope you listened to the explanation of the king. "peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. Peace means to be in the midst of all those things and still be calm in your heart. That is the real meaning of peace." There is a lot of noise, trouble and other challenges that push us to work hard. Sometimes the amount of situational or contextual stress we experience might appear overwhelming. But as I have presented in the past, the challenges of life are meant to be overcome. Some of us perceive these challenges as longterm catastrophic events that we would not be able to conquer. Such persons lose control and give up effort to overcome. They give in to the noise, trouble and hardwork. They even loose sense of the abiding presence of God. They loose focus and forget the purpose of their lives.

The truth is that everyone on this our planet earth must face certain challenges in life. No one is living a life devoid of difficulties. Both the rich and poor, tall and short, beautiful and ugly live with challenges. We need to develop the mindset that allows us to feel peace in the midst of

these challenges.

I am faced with a gazillion of pressures daily. But I have learned to take one step at a time to reach my daily destinations. Overtime, I have made Psalm 23 my daily food. As I step out of my convent to get to work each day, I begin the prayer and continue it until I get to my office. I believe you know the psalm. Here is the version I pray and sing daily:

My shepherd is the Lord, there is nothing I shall want.

The Lord is my shepherd;
There is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
To revive my drooping spirit.

He guides me along the right path;

▲ *
He is true to his name.

▲
If I should walk in the valley of darkness *

▲
No evil would I fear.

▲
You are there with your crook and your staff;
With these you give me comfort.

You have prepared a banquet for me *
In the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing.

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me *

▲
all the days of my life.

▲
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for-ever and ever.

This psalm brings to my awareness the goodness of God. It helps me to stay with the understanding that God knows everything about me and He shepherds me every moment. This psalm teaches me contentment with my God and His capacity to save me if He wants to do so. It also helps me to connect to the three young men who were thrown into the fiery furnace by King Nebuchadnezzar. These men showed unflinching loyalty to God even in the face of danger. They stayed calm and resolute. I encourage you my dear, to develop this disposition to calmness and peace even in the midst of afflictions and all sorts of trials. In these hard times of uncertainty stemming from election fears, I encourage you to stay peaceful. The Lord is your shepherd and

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The Story of the Rabbi's Gift

Good evening dear listener. We continue to pray for peace and unity in our country, Nigeria. In this edition of the programme, peace, I shall discuss present the story of the Rabbi's Gift as told by Dr. M. Scott Peck in the Different Drum.

The story concerns a monastery that had fallen upon hard times. Once a great order, as a result of waves of antimonastic persecution in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the rise of secularism in the nineteenth, all its branch houses were lost and it had become decimated to the extent that there were only five monks left in the decaying mother house: the abbot and four others, all over seventy in age. Clearly it was a dying order.

In the deep woods surrounding the monastery there was a little hut that a rabbi from a nearby town occasionally used for a hermitage. Through their many years of prayer and contemplation the old monks had become a bit psychic, so they could always sense when the rabbi was in his hermitage. "The rabbi is in the woods, the rabbi is in the woods ~~again~~ "again", they would whisper to each other. As he agonized over the imminent death of his order, it occurred to the abbot at one such time to visit the hermitage and ask the rabbi if by some possible chance he could offer any advice that might save the monastery.

The rabbi welcomed the abbot at his hut. But when the abbot explained the purpose of his visit, the rabbi could only commiserate with him. "I know how it is," he exclaimed. "The spirit has gone out of the people. It is the same in my town. Almost no one comes to the synagogue anymore." So the old abbot and the old rabbi wept together. Then they read parts of the Torah and quietly spoke of deep things. The time came when the abbot had to leave. They embraced each other. "It has been a wonderful thing that we should meet after all these years," the abbot said, "but I have still failed in my purpose for coming here. Is there nothing you can tell me, no piece of advice you can give me that would help me save my dying order?"

"No, I am sorry," the rabbi responded. "I have no advice to give. The only thing I can tell you is that the Messiah is one of you."

When the abbot returned to the monastery his fellow monks gathered around him to ask, "Well what did the rabbi say?" "He couldn't help," the abbot answered. "We just wept and read the Torah together. The only thing he did say, just as I was leaving --it was something cryptic-- was that the Messiah is one of us. I don't know what he meant."

In the days and weeks and months that followed, the old monks pondered this and wondered whether there was any possible significance to the rabbi's words. The Messiah is one of us? Could he possibly have meant one of us monks here at the monastery? If that's the case, which one? Do you suppose he meant the abbot? Yes, if he meant anyone, he probably meant Father Abbot. He has been our leader for more than a generation. On the other hand, he might have meant Brother Thomas. Certainly Brother Thomas is a holy man. Everyone knows that Thomas is a man of light. Certainly he could not have meant Brother Elred! Elred gets crotchety at times. But come to think of it, even though he is a thorn in people's sides, when you look back on it, Elred is virtually always right. Often very right. Maybe the rabbi did mean Brother Elred. But

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surely not Brother Phillip. Phillip is so passive, a real nobody. But then, almost mysteriously, he has a gift for somehow always being there when you need him. He just magically appears by your side. Maybe Phillip is the Messiah. Of course the rabbi didn't mean me. He couldn't possibly have meant me. I'm just an ordinary person. Yet supposing he did? Suppose I am the Messiah? O God, not me. I couldn't be that much for y-You, could I?

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As they contemplated in this manner, the old monks began to treat each other with extraordinary respect on the off chance that one among them might be the Messiah. And on the off chance that each monk himself might be the Messiah, they began to treat themselves with extraordinary respect.

Because the forest in which it was situated was beautiful, it so happened that people still occasionally came to visit the monastery to picnic on its tiny lawn, to wander along some of its paths, even now and then to go into the dilapidated chapel to meditate. As they did so, without even being conscious of it, they sensed the aura of extraordinary respect that now began to surround the five old monks and seemed to radiate out from them and permeate the atmosphere of the place. There was something strangely attractive, even compelling, about it. Hardly knowing why, they began to come back to the monastery more frequently to picnic, to play, to pray. They began to bring their friends to show them this special place. And their friends brought their friends.

Then it happened that some of the younger men who came to visit the monastery started to talk more and more with the old monks. After a while one asked if he could join them. Then another. And another. So within a few years the monastery had once again become a thriving order and, thanks to the rabbi's gift, a vibrant center of light and spirituality in the realm.

This story is often used in initiating community building. It is a story that teaches us the importance of treating each other well and living a good life. I got this story on Sunday when I was sharing with one of my Divine Love sister about how important it is for each of us to embody the qualities we want in our leaders and each other. I expressed that it is impossible to dream for a savior if none of us Nigerians embody the attributes of a savior. We must become the change we want in our homes, workplaces, villages, churches, and playgrounds. If you and I are incapable of being accountable, honest, trustworthy and incorruptible, it would be impossible for us to have a leader with these qualities because the leader is among us. The leader is one of us.

When I said, "the leader is one of us", my sister told me about the story I just shared with you. I googled the keywords and found many versions of the story. I chose the first version that I opened which reflected the story as narrated by Scott Peck in the Different Drum.

You see my dear, the leader is one us. Whether we are talking about our spiritual leaders, social leaders, educational leaders, family leaders or political leaders, the leader is among us. Like the Monks, if we reflect on the import of having the leader among us, we might become a little more mindful of how we treat each other. We might become less antagonistic, aggressive and divisive.

We might begin to respect the dignity of every human person because each one of us could be the leader.

Our society cannot breed what it does not have. Good leaders will emerge from good people. As I shared with you last week, remember that we must be the change we want for that change to materialize. If we want peace, we must become peaceful. We cannot excuse our own behavior by pointing at that of other people. Each of us must focus on improving our own behavior if we are to get life and living right. Nigeria cannot all of a sudden become incorruptible. Nigeria will become incorruptible when you and I become accountable, responsible, trustworthy, transparent, honest and selfless. Nigeria will become peaceful when you and I become peaceful.

So my dear, the future of Nigeria lies before us. The future of Nigeria is dependent on you and me. Like the monastery, Nigeria will become vibrant again if you and I do our homework. When we realize that the leader, the messiah, is among us. When we treat each other with due respect. Nigeria will become vibrant again. Nigeria will have great leaders. Nigeria will become peaceful. I encourage you to reflect on the story of the messiah among us and act wisely. Remember that peace is necessary for the survival of the human race. Live peace and continue to say with me, Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

If you have a story to share with me, find me on twitter @nmgloria, on phone at 0806 561 3687 or at my office at Godfrey Okoye University Enugu.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh, and the studio manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again same time next week for another edition of the programme, Peace.

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Blooming where you are Planted

Good evening dear listener. We continue to pray for peace and unity in our country, Nigeria. In this edition of the programme, peace, I shall discuss blooming where you are planted.

As I was preparing my story of peace, I stumbled upon a story by Diane Willis entitled Bloom... where you are planted. When I saw this story, I remembered that one of my life maxims is, "I will bloom wherever I am planted." I prayed to God for the grace to bloom wherever I am planted and I started perceiving myself as a plant that is meant to bloom all year round and on all kinds of soil. The story of Diane Willis reminds me of my own life. No life burden is too much for me. I approach my difficulties with a conquering and blooming spirit. I can tell you that our good God has allowed me to grow wherever I am planted. Sometimes, I look back at the bloom and is filled with awe as I reflect on the wonder of God's creation. I have come to a good understanding that blooming where we are planted could be an awesome experience for us and those who see us. Diane bloomed when she was on earth. She died in 2006. Here is her story:

I've never been much of a risk-taker, but the situation is a little different when it comes to serving God. During our twenty-five years of overseas ministry, my husband Warren and I have worked in all sorts of exotic locations--the Amazon, Mongolia, Guam-Micronesia, India, and Thailand, Philippines, China and more! While in those places, we endured some harsh conditions that would have scared off many people. Yet because we knew God had called us there, it was always fulfilling and exciting to see Him work. Difficult yes, but we knew our lives were in His hands and so maybe my risk tolerance is higher than I think....so long as I know it is God who is leading me into such uncharted territory.

Now I find myself in a more challenging place: **cancer**. I first entered this area in 1992 with something that seemed so minor, and I thought I would never have to go there again. However, in 2000, I embarked on yet another journey to this land and this time things were a lot more serious than before. Once again, I made it through and hoped that this would be the last trip. For three years it looked like that would be the case.

Then in 2004, I was called back once again and this time I realized it was going to be a one-way trip. Unlike our mission work, I can hardly call what I'm going through right now an adventure. But I have the same sense of assurance that I had on the mission field.

According to my oncologist, my life may wind up being a lot shorter than I had hoped. It is still in God's hands, and I trust Him to do what's best with the days He gives me. One of my regrets is not being able to be that wise, old guru to my family members that I always dreamed of being. Yet my sense of regret has been replaced by something else: **a sense of urgency**.

As I've thought about it, I have realized that living to be eighty or ninety and dispensing wisdom from my rocking chair isn't the end-all, be-all of life. It's living each day by taking advantage of every moment to speak life and love to my family, friends, and anyone who crosses my path. I can't afford to wait until I'm old to say or do these things because that day may never come. If

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I'm going to be wise and bold, it's got to be now. So I am saying the things that might have been taken for granted before because I assumed they were understood. I realize that if I don't say them now, they could be lost forever.

One of the things I most want to share is the difference God has made in my life. Each day with Him has been a fulfilling adventure. I haven't gained riches or fame as a result of my walk with God, but I have gained a richness of experience and a sense of significance and purpose that is worth far, far more. My life has been full of peace, joy, love, and every other good thing that His Word talks about as having the fruits of God's Spirit through Jesus Christ. (Galatians 5:22-23) More than anything, I want my family and friends to share in that goodness, to experience the sense of assurance I have that no matter how dark things look, God is always there beside us offering guidance, protection and hope.

Many people are completely wiped out when they get cancer because they try to battle it using only their own resources. I can't imagine what that must be like....to not know the God of all hope while confronting a life and death illness. **I pray my life may serve as an example to others...**to encourage them that they don't have to do it alone. No matter what you are facing--no matter what uncharted territory you have entered--God is right beside you, willing and able to help you in your time of need. All you have to do is ask for His Spirit to live and work through you.

Diane's story reminds me of how important it is to live each day well. There is no need saying, when I grow older I will do this or the other. I will be sharing words of wisdom with people. I will devote myself to God, the Church and to charitable acts. You and I do not know the length of time we have on earth. Therefore, the best approach to our lives would be living each day as if it were your last day on earth. The attitude of living each day well will keep you engaged and enable you to cooperate with God.

No obstacle in life would make us despair because we shall see every obstacle as a challenge that we would overcome. No amount of gossip, blackmail, slander or outright attack would stop us from living each day well. Those who design pull him or her down portions will find us soaring every day. Therefore, my dear, I encourage you to bloom wherever you are planted. Bloom because your creator, God, made you in his own image and likeness and gave you power to conquer the world. It would be absurd for you to allow the world to conquer you. Bloom wherever you are planted.

Like Diane, let your family and friends share in God's goodness, and experience the sense of assurance you have that no matter how dark things look, God is always there beside you offering guidance, protection and hope. This attitude to life will give you and your family a peaceful disposition even in turbulent times. There is no medicine that is greater than inner peace and this understanding that God is in control and will never leave you. God sends His spirit to embolden us when we should be afraid; to empower us when we might feel powerless; to lift us when we might feel down; to feel love when we might feel loveless. My dear, it is a beautiful thing to live in God at all times. It is a beautiful thing to live each day well. It is a beautiful thing to feel peace in the midst of chaos.

You and I must make the best of our situations. We must avoid living a life where we constantly wish for other peoples' situations. As I was preparing this story, I stumbled on another short story.

A clerk, coming out of his office, glanced at the Emperors palace with its shining domes and thought: 'What a shame that I wasn't born into the royal family, life could have been so easy...' And went in the direction of the town centre, where the rhythmical banging of the hammers and loud shouts were heard. His workers were building a new building right in the middle of the square. One of them saw the clerk with his papers and thought: 'Why didn't I go to study, like my father told me, now I would be doing easy jobs, writing texts the whole day, and life would be so easy...'

At that time, the Emperor came to the giant window in his palace and glanced into the square. He saw the workers, clerks, salesmen, buyers, children and grown-ups, and thought how it must be good to be in the fresh air all day, doing physical work, or working for someone, or just being a street vagrant and not thinking at all about politics and other difficult questions.

After reading the story, I was struck by the fact that some people live their lives each day wishing that they were someone else instead of making the best of their own life circumstances. Today, I encourage you to begin to bloom where you are planted. God our father knows your name and your destiny. Embrace your situation and bloom. Bloom and grow. Live each day well and feel inner peace. And please do continue to say with me. Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

If you have a story to share with me, find me on twitter @nmgloria, on phone at 0806 561 3687 or at my office at Godfrey Okoye University Enugu.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh, and the studio manager, I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace and peace. Remember to tune in again same time next week for another edition of the programme, Peace.

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The Love of the Holy Family

Good evening dear listener. I continue to pray that your heart will be filled with joy and peace this season. In this edition of the programme, peace, I shall begin with the story of the family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph as I reflect on the New Year.

I begin my story from the Gospel of Luke 2 (41-52)

Lk 2:41-52

Each year Jesus' parents went to Jerusalem for the feast of Passover, and when he was twelve years old, they went up according to festival custom. After they had completed its days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem, but his parents did not know it. Thinking that he was in the caravan, they journeyed for a day and looked for him among their relatives and acquaintances, but not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers. When his parents saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety." And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he said to them. He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and favor before God and man.

This story taken from the gospel of Luke depicts the love of the Holy Family. Whereas Jesus was busy doing the work of his Father, Mary and Joseph not knowing what he was up to set out to find him. They kept searching the town until they found him. As we celebrate this New Year, how are our families? Biological? Spiritual? Are there people we should search out and bring back home? Are we actually looking out for each other such that we are able to notice like Mary and Joseph when a member of our family is not on the journey home with us? Sometimes we get so busy, wrap ourselves in so much activities that we fail to notice that our father, our mother, our brother, our sister, our uncle, our aunt, our child is not in the travelling party with us. And sometimes we get so busy that even when we notice the absence, we do not set out at once to search for and bring back our father, mother, brother, sister and child.

The celebration of the feast of the Holy Family on this New Year day calls us to remember that the family is the bedrock of our faith. The family is the foundation of our entire being. When the family is shaky, our being collapses. If you followed some of my stories of forgiveness that I have been sharing with you, you would notice that strong families are able to overcome

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challenges that come their way whereas the weaker ones crumble and fizzle away.

As I expressed in previous editions, parents have significant roles to play in the spiritual life of children. From birth to young adulthood, parents have the responsibility of grooming their children to develop their spirituality. Parents are encouraged to create an atmosphere of love, acceptance, openness, forgiveness, and honesty, ensuring that every member of the family is important. They should show similar sensitivity to both good and bad behaviour of their children.

Children must also contribute to the stability of the family. Notice that Mary and Joseph were filled with anxiety but when they found Jesus, they felt better. And Jesus went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and favor before God and man. Jesus our savior as a child contributed to the stability of his family. He was obedient to his parents. I encourage you the child to put forth effort to ensure that your family stays healthy and stable. Do not allow yourself to become the reason for the crumbling of your family.

I urge you my dear listener to take seriously your role in the stability of your family. Learn compassion from this Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph. Communicate with your family as needed. Notice that Mary expressed their anxiety to Jesus. Sometimes, it is okay to express your anxiety to your children. Any family that is not open to discussing matters concerning them may have great challenges in life. If you recall the story of Kelly, you would notice that her family may have crumbled because her mother insisted that they would not discuss any issue related to Kelly's accident and the woman that died as a result of complications from the accident. When a family stops talking about issues bothering them and starts keeping secrets, the family begins to lose touch with the reality of each individual member and may eventually cease to care about one another.

I therefore, encourage you my dear listener to love your family and do everything in your capacity to uphold its stability and peace. In this New Year, I bless your family and wish you God's Joy and Peace. This song is for you.

Remember that if you have a story to share with me, you can find me on twitter @nmgloria, on phone at 0806 561 3687 or at my office at Godfrey Okoye University Enugu.

I wish you a happy New Year. Remember to say with me; Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh, and the studio manager, _____ I am Sr. Gloria Njoku wishing you grace, joy and peace. Remember to tune in again same time next week for another edition of the programme, Peace.

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We are Called to give Gift

Good evening dear listener. I pray that your heart will be filled with joy and peace this season. In this edition of the programme, peace, I shall begin with the story of the birth of Jesus as told in Luke 2: 1-20.

² In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while ^[a] Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned,

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glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

This story is a very beautiful and inspiring one. Imagine that you were Mary, the mother of the Saviour, how would you react to not finding a place to deliver your God son and ending up in a place for animals? Our blessed mother Mary leaves a great example of adjustment to challenges regardless of your status in life. The humility of Mary calls all of us to a humble lifestyle. The greatest story of humility is found in Jesus the Son of God who allowed himself to be born in a manger. Humility can help us to find peace in the midst of great challenges. May the humility of the Jesus and Mary inspire us to embrace humble approaches to life challenges.

But there is more to the story of the birth of Jesus. The Angel announced the birth of Jesus to the Shepherds. The Angel said, Glory to God in the highest and on earth Peace for those he favours. We join the Angels in praising God for his magnanimity expressed in allowing his son to come and dwell with us mere humans. We praise God for sending peace to our world.

Isaiah speaks about this Prince of Peace thus: The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; on the inhabitants of a country in shadow dark as death light has blazed forth. You have enlarged the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at harvest time, as they exult when they are dividing the spoils. For the yoke that weighed on it, the bar across its shoulders, the rod of its oppressor, these you have broken as on the day of Midian. For a Son has been born for us, a son has been given to us, and dominion has been laid on his shoulders; and this is the name he has been given, 'Wonder-Counsellor, Mighty God, Eternal-Father, Prince-of-Peace.'

My dear listener, contemplate these powerful qualifiers of our savior; wonder counselor, Mighty God, Eternal-Father, Prince-of-Peace.' If you are looking for a great counselor, you will find the best in Jesus, looking for the God of your life, Jesus is there, he knows the challenges of being human and He is God indeed. Are you looking for a father, there is an Eternal father in Jesus. Lean on him, shoulder his yoke for he says that his yoke is easy and his burden is light. He is a father of fathers who knows how to carry his children in the palm of his hands. Talk about peace, Jesus is our Prince of Peace. So if you are looking for peace, find Jesus and you shall certainly have peace.

We have been discussing stories of forgiveness for the past few weeks. If you have succeeded in forgiving those who offended you and yourself, this Prince of Peace shall find a home in your heart. You know that Jesus came many years ago and when we celebrate Christmas, we are remembering the birth of Christ. This Christ is born in our hearts when we connect to him, turn away from our sins, strengthen the pathways or rugged placed in our lives and embrace Jesus.

Dear listener, remember that Christmas is the time of the year when we celebrate faith, family, and sharing gifts and greetings. When Jesus was born, he brought light, emancipation, joy and peace. The Wise men recognizing this great gifts from Jesus, offered him there token of appreciation, .. and going into the house they saw the child with his mother Mary, and falling to their knees they did him homage. Then opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

You see Jesus gave us great gifts. The wise men gave him their gifts. So we are called to give gifts. It is a time for forgiving and for giving. I urge you to take time to forgive those who have offended you if you haven't already done so. Let all families reconcile and have this peace that

Jesus brought to us. As you celebrate the miracle of God becoming human and dwelling among us for our sake, may your heart be filled with joy and peace. May this joy and peace radiate from you and touch every member of your family, your clan and your community. May peace reign! **This song is for you.**

Remember that if you have a story to share with me, you can find me on twitter @nmgloria, on phone at 0806 561 3687 or at my office at Godfrey Okoye University Enugu.

I wish you a merry Christmas. Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

On behalf of my producer, Fidelis Onoh, and the studio manager, Gloria Njoku wishing you grace, joy and peace. Remember to tune in again same time next week for another edition of the programme, Peace.

I am Sr.

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The Story of Mr. Innocent

Peace Talk Series by Mary Gloria C. Njoku

In this edition of the Programme, Peace, I shall tell you the story of Mr. Innocent

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The civil war in Nigeria has just ended. The people of Umuozu did not see Nigerian soldiers until the day the war ended, the soldiers were shouting "One Nigeria! One Nigeria!!" No one was killed as soldiers were parading through the length and breadth of the community. The people of Umuozu took part in Biafra by sending their able-bodied young men to the warfront as soldiers. Those who could not go to war fought at home by joining the Militia, Vigilante and the Red Cross.

▲ Innocent was one of those who joined the Red Cross. The war devastated the community. Men and women died in droves owing to starvation and hunger, whereas kwashiorkor played havoc with the children. It was this ugly situation that touched Innocent to the marrows. He decided to rescue his people. He took two men Mr. Amadi and Mr. Nwoke and travelled to Uturu, a distance of thirty miles by bicycle. Uturu was the seat of the Red Cross. Innocent's aim was to invite the Red Cross to bring food and medicine to his people. The Red Cross director was not available when they arrived. They slept in the open air at the mercy of the harmattan blizzard. They reported the devastating situation in the town. Mr. Limport was moved by what he heard and decided to come three days later. He advised innocent and his colleagues to go home and set up a clinic where the sick people would be treated.

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When innocent and his group returned to Umuozu, they summoned the leaders of the community and informed them about the result of their trip. A committee was set up to handle the matter. The primary school in the town was converted into a sickbay. Two qualified nurses were hired. The sick people were assembled in the school. Mr. Limport came as promised, bringing with him food and drugs. The nurses started to treat the patients at once. The people of Umuozu were very happy. At least some lives would be saved. Things went smoothly but unknown to Innocent, his cousin Mr. Ekwedike was not happy with the situation. He felt Innocent was trying to outshine him in the town since he was a wealthy man and the people were worshipping him. He began clandestine moves to remove Innocent from the leadership of the sickbay.

Mr. Ekwedike and his godson Mr. Ikekwe who claimed to be the Red Cross chief in Ugiri area,

sent uncomplimentary reports to Mr. Limport at Uturu. They claimed that Innocent and his group were mismanaging the relief materials sent to the clinic. It was a big lie. Nobody mismanaged anything. Innocent and his group ignored them and continued with their humanitarian work. As result of much pressure, Mr. Limport came to Umuozu again and sacked Innocent and his group. Mr. Ekwedike took over the management of the sickbay and the relief materials. His first action was to carry the food and the drugs to his house. These had been kept in a store in the school premises. At the time when Innocent was at the helm of affairs no life was lost but when Ekwedike took over, people started to die. The reason for the frequent deaths was that Ekwedike confiscated the relief materials and sold them. Innocent could not believe his eyes that his own blood cousin could do such a thing to him. This sounded like a palace coup. It was greed that led Ekwedike to do what he did. Innocent calmly left the scene.

Mr. Ekwedike was not yet done with his grand design to eliminate Mr. Innocent. He concocted a story claiming that Innocent hired policemen to search his house for missing relief materials. He assembled the elders and the people that mattered in the village to come and try Innocent. The trial took place in his house. When the people assembled, he fed them with his stories. He produced two witnesses whom he claimed saw when Innocent brought the policemen. One of the witnesses stated that he heard that Mr. Innocent brought policemen but whether they came or not he was not aware. The other witness disappeared from the scene. They people were confused and did not know what to do. Instead of telling Mr. Ekwedike right in his face that he goofed, they decided to use traditional means. Meanwhile Innocent had no idea what Mr. Ekwedike claimed. The elders summoned everybody to Nkwodim market square. There they brought out their traditional 'Ofo' and said "let the guilty person die" and hit the ofo on the ground. Everybody left to their various homes. Innocent was so sad. He couldn't understand that people who suffered the ravages of the Biafran war, people whom he sacrificed his life to rescue, were unable to say one good thing but preferred to blind themselves with injustice. Innocent went home and handed everything to God, who is a just judge. And because Innocent was not guilty of the accusation made by Ekwedike, he did not die. He did not hold the harm done to him against the elders of Umuozu and his cousin. Innocent continued to make sacrifices for his people.

This story invites us to remain consistent with peacemaking strides even when the going gets tough. In all circumstances, we must say let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

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The Story of Mr. Innocent 2

Peace Talk Series by Mary Gloria C. Njoku

In this edition of the programme, peace, I present to you another story of Mr. Innocent.

Remember Innocent from my previous edition. Innocent was the man who suffered to get red cross aid for his people during the war but his cousin connived and took over the coordination of the red cross aid from him and accused him of an offence Innocent did not commit. Innocent was later proven innocent of the accusation.

I had the privilege of meeting Mr Innocent again and again. I discovered that Mr. Innocent has not changed his attitude and the promotion of peaceful resolutions to issues involving him and others. During the month of July, Innocent's nephew, Onyema, who was assisting him in his home poisoned him. Indeed the story was told that Onyema's real target was Mr. Innocent and his wife. Unfortunately, Innocent's wife, Amarachi, did not feel like eating that faithful night so she went to bed without eating the poisoned food with her husband.

In the middle of the night, Innocent started having problems. Amarachi, his wife tried to help to ease his pain but his pain worsened with every minute. Luckily for Innocent, Amarachi thought of giving him oil. When Innocent had consumed the palm oil he began to purge until he released the poison in his system. The next morning, Amarachi called her children and told them about the ordeal and how they discovered that Onyema their nephew gave Innocent the poison.

The children were very infuriated because of this occurrence and they demanded that Onyema be sent back to his parents at once. One of the daughters, Ugonma called her friend and shared the experience with her friend who advised that Onyema should be arrested. Ugonma, who seemed to understand her father's way of life discussed the implication of arresting Onyema. She felt that the arrest may bring conflict in the family and so she advised her father to send Onyema back without wasting time. Innocent listened to Ugonma but asked that Onyema be given two weeks before being sent home. Innocent and his daughter, Ugonma dialogued about the best possible way to send him home without disruption of family peace. Eventually, they agreed to send him home as soon as he completes his term examinations; which was in two days time. So Innocent sent Onyema home on the Saturday following his examinations. Innocent did not tell

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Onyema's parents what he did. When Innocent returned home and told his wife and children that he did not inform his parents about his poison behaviour, Innocent's children were infuriated and wondered why their father did not spill the bean. Innocent quietly explained to them that he would inform Onyema's parents later when things have calmed down. Throughout this experience, I was informed that Innocent remained calm about the whole situation. When some of his children wanted to take up the case, he advised them to let things be. He was thankful that his life has been spared. I learned though that Innocent is now afraid of eating the food through which he was poisoned. The last time I saw him, he said that he is unable to eat the food no matter how well prepared it is.

My dear listener, if you were Innocent will you react like him. If you were his wife would you support Innocent in his decision to approach the situation calmly. If you were his child, would you be alright with his decision or would you involve the police anyway. I would really like to get your feedback about the way Innocent managed his poisoning episode.

I am sure that you might be saying that this story is only be told and treated like this because Innocent survived the poison. The ending might be different if he had died because of the poison. Here is my understanding about the family of Innocent. The man, Innocent has been so used to finding peaceful resolutions of challenges that come his way that his wife and children have learned to ask themselves what their father would do in any given situation. Therefore, most times, after the initial feeling of we must do something remarkable, Innocent's children will follow the option they feel that their father would prefer. Therefore my prediction is that if Innocent had died, his children would not let people know that he died from poison.

I learned in the course of my discussion with innocent's family that Innocent has had many near death experiences including previous poisoning attempts, hired assassins and road accidents. And in all cases, Innocent avoided generating family conflicts. As I looked at Innocent in his old age, I cannot help feeling that the secret to his ability to stay healthy, energetic and youthful is his peaceful disposition.

Innocent's story reminds me of a family that visited me last month to inform me that they have discovered the person who poisoned their son and that they are going to ensure that the clan's decision to excommunicate them from the village is carried out and that they want the culprit and his family to suffer. The question I asked them was, will all these efforts bring back their son who has died? The answered no. Then I asked them why they are spending so much energy to make sure that their own blood brother dies along with their son. At the end of the day, I asked them to reflect on what they want to achieve, the peace their son attempted to bring in their family and how they would want to remember the legacy of their son. I wish this family can find new ways to manage their challenges. I wish they can grant pardon to the culprit and wish him true conversion. I know in my heart that granting pardon to someone who has offended us and wishing them true conversion and graces sometimes brings new life into the person who offended us. On our part, we feel free and sometimes remember that we have joined Jesus in saying "Father forgive them for they know not what they are doing." I believe that this attitude can bring happiness and peace to us. We are then capacitated to allow God to take complete control of our lives, to fight for us if need be and to shield us from all unwanted

calamities in accordance with his will.

I pray and hope that we will have the courage to endure hurts that people met out to us for the sake of the kingdom of God. I pray that people who are already peacemakers will touch our lives so that we can learn to live peace. I remember our Holy Father Pope John Paul II in his example of peace and Mother Theresa of Calcutta who created and sustained peace through social responsibility - caring for the less privileged. I pray that the spirit of these icons of peace may inspire us to join the peace movement. Let us make ours each day the prayer of St. Francis

1. Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love.
Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord
And where there's doubt, true faith in you.
2. Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there's despair in life, let me bring hope.
Where there is darkness, only light.
And where there's sadness, ever joy.
O Master, grant that I may never seek,
so much to be consoled, as to console,
to be understood, as to understand,
to be loved, as to love with all my soul.
3. Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
in giving of ourselves that we receive,
and in dying that we 're born to eternal life.

Francis of Assisi, 1182-1226

So let us continue to pray and say Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me.

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