

Looking Ahead



NACF
North America



July 2018

BY SISTER NGOZI MARTIN-OGUIKE

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Celebrating God's faithfulness

When we joined the Christian Union in the 1980s, it was for the immediate need to associate with like-minded people who profess the same faith and have similar vision with us. The singular aim was to keep our relationship with the Lord. I remember the wildness of campus and our desire to focus on the Lord beginning with the end in mind.

Under the tutelage of colleagues and senior friends of the CU and NIFES, we grew in the Lord and left indelible marks on the sands of time. We affected our peers and those we were acquainted with during those years. To think of it, everything else that followed hinged on that solid foundation that was laid during those formative years.

I remember the 21st anniversary of NIFES as if it was yesterday. We gathered at Shagamu just after my service year and I was on my way to joining the staff of NIFES, with a childlike zeal and eagerness. I cannot forget our retreat at Gana Ropp in Plateau State, seeking God's face on the hilltops of that gorgeous veldt. Life could never be the same after that. The urgency of the call has remained a mandate and I constantly hear within me, "Woe is me, if I preach not the gospel" (1 Corinthians 9:16).

I remember the trying times that NIFES had and times when we doubted the efficacy of certain mandates from the leadership of NIFES. The ministry had definitely been tried and tested. Amidst disagreements, defiance, schisms and breakups, we still see the vision surging up and unscathed by the scourge of hostilities. "The vision is greater than any of us," is a conclusion often made in resignation to the will of God and we trudge ahead with the key of reconciliation. Then, one new season emerges after another.

Today, I remember those prophecies of our youth. The call to go and reach the utmost parts of the earth with the message, the blessing of our gifts and the numerous altar calls, deliverances

and renewal of our feeble commitment to the call. And despite all odds, I can see that those prayers were answered as I see the humble giants still standing as we reminisce on the past and sing with joy as we await the best ahead of us.

Now, I celebrate the power and presence of my all-powerful, merciful, forgiving and sanctifying God who has upheld me among many. I rejoice for the singlemindedness of those who the Lord showed the vision and who have not lost it for one day.

I cannot forget to honor Uncle Kola Ejinwumi, Brothers: Femi Adeleye, Charles Achonwa, Gideon Mallam, Mike Adegbile, Bala Usman and Rex Onuh, who have held the baton and kept the torch burning amidst the extinguishing floods from vision quenchers. I know there are so many men and women who have toiled for this vision in fifty years. The Lord has a perfect record of every work and will certainly reward His faithful ones.

Lord, you are ever faithful. We, of the NACF-North America join the other associates all over the world to celebrate the golden jubilee of this movement that has brought renewal and empowerment to Nigeria. We rejoice at God's faithfulness and continue to hold up the banner of righteousness, daring to be different in a fast-changing world.

NIFES will continue to thrive!

**Welcome to the NIFES Associates
Community Fellowship-North America,
Dallas 2018.**

It is with immense joy and excitement that I welcome you all to the 3rd biennial conference of NACF-North America here in Dallas Texas. You shall be abundantly blessed.



NIFES MINISTRY UPDATE

Introduction

It is by the Lord's mercies that we were not consumed. Indeed grace and mercy prevailed for us as we continue to labour among students to see Jesus form in them. More so in this our year of golden jubilee, God has proven to us beyond every reasonable doubt that He is our refuge and strength and to Him alone be the glory.

Ministry Update

The current ministry year started in October 2017 and God has been faithful.

In November 2017, we had our **National Delegates Prayer Conference** at NIFES Conference Centre, Kwali, Abuja. It was indeed a time to pray for our nation Nigeria, our mission field – the campuses and our families. The presence of the Lord was mightily with us in that Conference. 1,053 students, 62 staff, 40 volunteers and 25 graduates were in attendance. The Conference theme was Effectual Prayer – James 5: 13 - 18

2018 Easter Conference was awesome. The Conference with the theme '*Living to Please God*' (1 Thess 4:1) held in 67 venues across the nation with **8,598** persons in attendance out of which **1104** were Associates, **358** non NIFES students and **7,136** were NIFES students. At the Conference a total of **375** persons gave their lives to the Lord Jesus; **1,228** persons rededicated their lives for a closer walk with Him while **302** persons received the Holy Ghost baptism. In more than **90%** of the venues, participants went out for evangelism within and outside campuses and many souls were won for the Lord.

As at the end of March 2018, the Lord has helped us in our ministries to the

students. Through our **Discipleship Trainings**, 4, 570 students were trained out of which 373 students accepted Jesus as their Lord and Saviour while 506 Christian students rededicated their lives to follow Jesus. In our **Leadership Training Programmes** meant for newly elected campus group leaders, a total of 1, 524 leaders were trained on principles of biblical leadership. 2, 301 students were exposed and trained on understanding and correct interpretation of the Scripture in our **Bible Training Weekends**. In all of our training programmes within this period, 1,086 students became Christians and 1, 298 already Christian rededicated their lives afresh to serve Jesus continuously.

In our bid to strengthen Scripture engagement among our students and other NIFES stakeholders, our **Expository Bible Training Course** held from 26th May – 2nd June 2018. A total of 224 participants attended the course. Please continue to pray that the gains of the

Course would be abiding and bring about a new generation of Bible Teachers/Preachers who would stand to declare the truth of God's word as He intended.

Forthcoming Program

- **NIFES @ 50:** This year NIFES is 50. There shall be a national Golden Jubilee Celebration on the September 1st 2018 at Abuja. Please do join us to pray for the success of this meeting.

- **2018 NATIONAL DELEGATES PRAYER CONFERENCE (NDPC)**

2018 NDPC has been scheduled for 22nd – 25th November 2018 with the theme: In the Day of His Power – Psalms 110:3. It promises to be another time to seek the face of God upon lives and nations. Guest speakers include Dr. Paul Enenche and Pastor Charles Achonwa

Rex Onuh

NIFES National Director

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Students at the National Delegates Prayer Conference

Director of Associates Retires Rev. Ebere Eze



After disengaging from NIFES on the 31st of March, I took three months off to rest and think through my future. But during this three months, I was not idle. I serve as a non-stipendiary priest with the Diocese of Bukuru. During this period the Bishop assigned me to teach holistic missions at the Cathedral. This had sparked a wave of revival and specific actions of community development.

As at today, I have just secured an appointment to work with a Christian NGO that is committed to National Transformation. So, I resumed officially on the second of July. I will still combine this with pastoral work in the Anglican Communion.

In addition, I serve as the Secretary for NIFES@50 Jubilee celebration event. This has been a very tasking work but I am coping with it. The national event comes up on September 1, 2018. It will be appreciated if NACF NA can send a delegate to the event. It is going to be a landmark event.

*NACF-North America was started in 2012 under Brother Eze's leadership. We wish you a fruitful retirement and greater heights in ministry.

From Our Finance Office

Beloved brethren, I observed that only a handful of us paid our annual dues of \$100 per family for 2017. That means anyone who did not pay their dues last year will have to pay \$200 dues per family this year. This is not the registration for our conference. You can pay on site at the conference in Dallas by cash, check, credit or debit card

- Or mail your check to Lanre Abegunde 40 Iroquois Road Levittown PA 19057.
- If you choose to pay directly into the account, here is the account info: Bank of America. ☐ Account name: NIFES Associates Community Fellowship - Account #. 381050203961, Routing #. 021200339.
- You may also pay into our PayPal account through nacfnorthamerica@gmail.com.

Thanks to those who have paid up and/or donated to support our 2018 conference.

God bless you.

Sister Lanre Abegunde (Fin. Sec.)

Excerpts from Conference welcome addresses

You are all welcome to this dual occasion of our conference and golden jubilee. We are privileged to be among a willing and obedient people who prioritize the vision of fulfilling our calling.

Please, join me to welcome our guest speakers and resource persons and pray that the Lord uses each of them to reach us at the points of our need.

As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Nigeria Fellowship of Evangelical Students, we look ahead in obedience to God's holy calling, "But one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead. I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13b-14).

Brethren, we are here to refuel and forge ahead. Whatever we did in the past, whatever our struggles or our failures were, this is time to look unto Jesus, forget the past and lay hold onto the object of our calling.

May we all be found faithful at His return! Many blessings!

Sister Ngozi Martin-Oguike
National Coordinator

A Welcome from the Local Organizing committee:

It is with Jesus joy in my heart and a great delight, on behalf of the local organizing committee of this conference that I welcome you all to this third NIFES Associate Community Fellowship (NACF), North America conference, holding here in Dallas where God lives in all of the United States of America.

You don't have to be jealous that I am particular that God lives in Dallas, and not in your city or state, and in case you are jealous, then relocate to Dallas Texas where everything is sized big.

I want to specially welcome all our guests from Nigeria, especially the national Director of NIFES; in the person of Bro Rex Onuh. I welcome all our guest speakers, those within the state of Texas and those from outside state. I believe the hand of God is especially upon you for our good this weekend in Jesus name

- Pastor Phillip Okweni for LOC

Special Feature:

Study the Word and Save Your Hearers

A clergy woman read Ephesians 4:22-24 where scripture says “put off ... the old man ... and ... put on the new man ...” and thought to herself that scripture was encouraging her to do away with her husband with whom she had some misunderstanding and marry a young man she was recently attracted to in Church. She must have believed that scriptures could somehow be available to directly address each personal matter as they arose day by day. I remember as a boy reading the story of the funeral of Rachel and in Genesis 35:20 it reads, “... Jacob set up a pillar, and to this day that pillar marks Rachel’s tomb” and I thought to myself that since the Bible says “to this day that pillar marks Rachel’s tomb” that the pillar must be there till today. My method of reading that passage failed to differentiate between the “today” of the author from my own “today”.

We employ diverse methods when we read the Bible, but often we may not be conscious of the method we are using. The method of your reading Scripture is very important and could often be as important as the passage you are reading itself. Jesus asked: What is written? How do you read it? (Luke 10:26). The question of “what is written?” is a question of what the Holy Spirit has caused human persons to write down in the Holy Scriptures for some specific time bound or eternal reasons. The second part on “how do you read it?” is the method you have adopted to guide your mind to understand the “why” and “how” the Holy Spirit

caused it to be written. Some have no methods at all. So they interpret by what suits their imaginations best at the moment. That way you belittle the word of God and get less out of your reading exercise.

Some people think that the Bible was written to throw down instructions that we must obey to make God happy whether we understand it or not. But the best part is to cheerfully follow what is written because you understand “why” and “how” the Holy Spirit wants us to use it. If you understand it you will dearly love what you are reading. Remember: a) There is a direct reason (or reasons) for which anything written in the Bible was written when it was written. You need to find the reasons by studying other relevant passages of the Bible and may be other Bible Study notes if you want the passage you read to bring you its intended rich blessings.

b) The old Testament writings give very rich backgrounds to the New Testament writings. However, some Old Testament writings are for specific OT place and OT time. They nevertheless point to some eternal truth in the NT. “... the reality is found in Christ” - Colossians 2:17.

c) The plain reading of the passage coupled with the plain reading of other passages relevant to the topic is nearer the truth of what God wants you to know from the passage. The Bible is written by plain people for a plain thinking people. There is no secret code by which only some “anointed” people decode Bible passages: the Bible is a plain book for honest plain people, it is not a secret book. But like every



plain book you need to work hard at it. If not you will not understand some things the Holy Spirit is saying from His written word. Bible records that Samuel was confused at what God was saying because “Samuel did not yet know the Lord: the word of God had not yet been revealed (given) to him” (1 Samuel 3:1-7). The word is revealed by the Holy Spirit when you have taken time and useful resources to consider it.

If you take these into account and really work hard at it “you will save both yourself and your hearers” (1 Timothy 4:16). To preach the word is not just to open your mouth and be talking any how you feel. It is the eternal word of the Almighty. Study hard and shut up for a minute before the King and learn.

If preachers in this country truly knew God's word and held God's word high and honoured the word beyond their personal pride, fame and riches, this country would have been long out of the woods.

We shall get there. By faith in Christ we shall overcome someday!
[#StudytheWordandSaveYourHearers](#)

Ven A. C. Chukwuocha Ph.D.

Owerri, July 2018

Loving this Child

- By Sister Ngozi

I have the most exceptional friends in the schoolhouse. Uju would come to my door every morning to tell me the same exciting story every day. "Miss, I'm going to high school next year!" he announced, as we did our usual thumbs up and he leaped excitedly through the hall way. I haven't seen that friend of mine since this school year, because he did make it to the high school and I have not had a chance to visit him. I love that child. His parents are a beautiful couple who did everything to support him and he enjoyed all the privileges in the building. He was a most honored member of the school choir and sang with all his zest. Uju's siblings were always at every function with dad and mom and everyone respected them all.

I'm sure it does not occur to Uju that he is different from his siblings. If anything he enjoyed so much more rights and privileges that he supposed he was better off. And sure he is, always well-dressed and cherished by teachers and peers. I think his success so far has been a combination of parental, teacher and peer support. It never occurred to me to find out how he felt outside school, because he was always excited to be in school. He loves school. This is the child with autism in his ideal environment; a school that has learned to include everyone, including those with disabilities with the understanding that no one is perfect. We all have our special needs and must accommodate one another.

What is autism?

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a group of developmental disorders with a wide range of indicators, abilities, and levels of disability (NIMH, 2016). The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2016) declared that 1 in 68 children are born with autism in the US. It occurs in all racial groups and is 4.5 times more prevalent with boys than with girls. Autism presents in different ways at varying levels. Children with autism may have social problems, communication delays, repetitive behavior, lack of interest in activities, which symptoms may be seen within the first two years of the infant's life (NIMH, 2016).

What is the Christian leader's role in a community with the growing incidence of Autism? Very often people

with disabilities are ignored and treated according to the legal tenets just to avoid litigations. With cases of ASD, it is necessary to empathize with the child and the family involved. More so, knowledge of the implications and treatment (training) of the individual will help to improve outcomes. In so doing, leveraging their talents and skills will help to build our society. Like Uju's parents, parents of children with autism should play a major role in supporting their children. They should be open and sincere with the needs of the children, keeping it real. They must demand for services, advocate for the inclusion of their children in schools and other service places. The federal government mandates that all children must be placed in the least restrictive environment (LRE) to meet their educational needs. No child should be kept out of school until all available services are exhausted.

What happens when Uju is in his local church or community center? Are they likely to give him the same support? What should be the role of the church in meeting the needs of children on the autism spectrum? Is there a way schools can help educate their communities about the needs of these children? The leader needs to help the community to bear burdens and care for those in need. The church should be the most welcoming environment for this miracle child. These children need support to attain independence at their own pace, therefore, schools, churches and all Christian groups should work together to enable these children thrive by treating them with understanding and helping them where needed. Autism awareness should not just be limited to the month of April. Individuals and families should be reminded to befriend the child or adult with autism, Give them some gifts, visit and play with them, attend their party if they invite you and most of all, pray for families of individuals with autism. We should start organizing parties and social gatherings for some young people with autism in our churches and communities.

Autism is a lifelong disorder, however training along with praying can make a whole world of difference.

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Time to Pray



1. Let us open our mouths and praise the Almighty God who kept every one of us alive, who has been good to us every day of this year

2. Heavenly Father, you are the all sufficient God, let my miracle and everyone coming for this conference be evident in Jesus name

3. Every plans of the enemy to slow the growth of NIFES, the governing body, the students, the alumni and friends of this mission be aborted in Jesus name

4. Heavenly Father, move in mercy and do great and marvelous work in our lives

5. Heavenly Father, you are unlimited in power, in faithfulness, therefore fulfill all your promises, do the impossible, in Jesus name.
Give thanks and your expectations shall become manifestations.

- Sister Modupe
Daramola

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NEW Teleconference Number

NACF-North America quarterly teleconference number has been changed to the following toll-free number: Call in # 1-218-632-0471, Pass Code – 369707. Please, join us whenever you are notified. Also, join our Facebook and WhatsApp Groups.

Testifying of God's Goodness

Heartfelt appreciation of God's Mercies, His Blessings and Favor on all NIFESIANS worldwide and particularly NIFES Associates in North America. We will grow from faith to faith, Amen. Osinachi, Stephanie and Ogechukwu Egnini



Dr. Oge has just completed his residency in New York and Stephanie is now a Registered Nurse in NY. We join them to thank God. To the glory of God NACF-North America wishes them God's abundant blessings in all their future endeavors.

PHOTO GALLERY



NACF- North America 2016
conference in New Jersey.

Outreach and family visits.

We are family, we are
ONE!