

**THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN NORTHERN NIGERIA UNDER THE
EPISCOPACY OF BISHOP TITUS EYIOLORUNSEFUNMI OGBONYOMI
FROM 1976 TO 1996**

By

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Masters of theology (MTh) in History of Christianity in the Faculty of Human
Sciences in the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa.**

June 2006.

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DECLARATION

I hereby state that the whole dissertation, except where specifically indicated to the contrary in the text, is my own original work.

Samuel Gambo Kwashang

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..... for S.G. Kwashang Rev. Keyie

Date:

..... 27/09/06

As supervisor, I have agreed to the submission of this dissertation.

Professor Philippe Denis

Sign:

..... P. Denis

Date:

..... 27 September 2006

DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece of work to God Almighty. Also to my wife Sarah T S. Kwashang, our blessed children, Florence Mariya, Joel Bahori, Comfort Dashyin, and Cyprian Fawe, and our parents.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am humbly grateful to God for the great and uncountable things He has done for us as a family, throughout my studies here in the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa and especially in this research work.

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Words cannot express my appreciation to my sponsors the Church Missionary Society (CMS), for counting me worthy to enjoy this good privilege of sharing in their generosity. I acknowledge that without their vision for the church, I would not have been here. May the Lord continue to bless CMS.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria under the episcopacy of Bishop Titus Eyiolorunsefunmi Ogbonyomi from 1976 to 1996. Northern Nigeria is a predominantly Muslim area, with Christians and those involved in traditional worship constituting the remaining of the population. Bishop Ogbonyomi through his charges pointed out that Christians in Northern Nigeria have long complained of discrimination and religious violence. Furthermore, he noted that the economy of the country, corruption, secret societies, creation of dioceses out of the diocese of Northern Nigeria, education, ethnicity in the political life of Nigerians and the issues of women ordination and polygamy were also issues that had effected the Christians in Northern Nigeria negatively. Bishop Ogbonyomi was not happy with the situation the Christians in that part of the country were passing through.

During his episcopacy, he saw corruption, religious violence, poverty among the other issues mentioned above as a disgraceful situation the country found itself. He used much space in his charges to speak against those that were the perpetrators of such behaviours. The statistics of the content of the charges show that among the issues he discussed, economic issue was reflected in all his twenty-one charges, except that of 1995, thus making it the bishop's first and most consistent priority during his episcopacy. Though the issue of Islam has the highest space-percentage according to the statistics, it did not appear in the charges as often as the issue of the economy. Again, though the economic issue was his first priority, the statistics show that the amount of space devoted to it in the charges is quite low in some years. This indicated when the bishop had an increased or decreased interest in the topic, and when his focus was shifted to other issues.

On the issue of secret societies, though the bishop indicated that these societies were already in existence during his episcopacy and that their effects on Nigerians were destructive, did not give a clear explanation of what such societies mean in Nigeria. The thesis is of the opinion that the very fact that secret societies are so difficult to define and

thus deal with, highlights the need for a deeper investigation than that provided by Bishop Ogbonyomi. In addition, the bishop's attitude toward the issues of women ordination and polygamy in the Anglican Church in Nigeria indicated the topic to be of the least interest to the bishop. It appeared only in three of his charges (1989, 1994 and 1995) and, whenever it appeared, it did so with less concentration than other topics. The position of the bishop on women ordination was not very clear, though he referred to the non-inclusion of a woman among Jesus' apostles as a reason to approve the omission of women from ordination in the church. However, he was very negative about polygamy in the church.

In conclusion the researcher argues that for a peaceful and successful society to be achieved in the area of study, a normative framework based on the concept of social justice needs to be developed, which should form the basis for evaluating the legacies of protracted injustice, and acts of social and moral indiscipline that were rampant in the area.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABM:	American Baptist Mission.
AMON:	Ahmaddiyya Muslim Organisation in Nigeria.
BMC:	Mennonites Brethren in Christ.
CAN:	Christian Association of Nigeria.
CCN:	Christian Council of Nigeria.
CMS:	Church Missionary Society.
COCIN:	Church of Christ in Nigeria.
D8.	Organisation of Eight Developing Countries
DSM:	Danish Sudan Mission.
ECWA:	Evangelical Church of West Africa.
EMS:	Evangelical Missionary Society.
FCS:	Fellowship of Christian Students.
IWF:	Islam Welfare Foundation.
JNI:	Jama-atu Nasril Islam.
NBC:	Nigeria Baptist Convention.
NEAC:	Northern Education Advisory Council.
NLC:	Nigeria Labour Congress.
NTA:	National Television Authority.
OIC:	Organisation of Islamic Conference.
RCM:	Roman Catholic Mission.
ROF:	Reformed Ogboni Fraternity.
SAM:	Society of African Mission.
SAP:	Structural Adjustment Programme.
SIM:	Sudan Interior Mission.
SPM:	Sudan Pioneer Mission.
SUM:	Sudan United Mission.
UPE:	Universal Primary Education.
WAI:	War Against Indiscipline.
WASC:	West African School Certificate

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CHAPTER ONE

1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Nigeria is a secular country with freedom of worship and settlement entrenched in its constitution. However, Bishop Titus E. Ogbonyomi, the bishop of the diocese of Northern Nigeria (Anglican Communion) from 1976 to 1996, through the charges he delivered to his diocesan synod, observed that Christians in Northern Nigeria were often deprived of freedom of worship and access to land for building places of worship.¹ Religion became a divisive force, leading to discrimination and violence between Muslims and Christians. He further observed that since Christians are the minority in that part of the country, they have tended to be the victims of religious violence, segregation and discrimination.² The effect of the segregation and discrimination among the people in that part of the country remains something of concern, although the violence appears to have subsided to some extent.

The researcher has chosen to focus on Bishop Ogbonyomi's episcopacy after having read the bishop's charges delivered to the diocesan synod of Northern Nigeria (later diocese of Kaduna), from 1976 to 1996. These charges will constitute the main sources for the research. The researcher, who is an indigenous Anglican priest working in Northern Nigeria, decided to conduct this research to discover the causes of the segregation and discrimination among the people, which seem to have been the source of the conflicts between them. He felt that there is a need for him to revisit Bishop Ogbonyomi's charges, identify the issues mentioned in them and reflect on them critically.

¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Third Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria 1978," in *The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) Kaduna Diocese: Bishop's Charges Delivered 1976-1996*. Kaduna (Nig.): Dare Williams Printers, 1996, p. 43.

² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Tenth Synod of Kaduna Diocese 1986," in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 193. See also the Second Session of the Thirteenth synod 1995, p.400.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Northern Nigeria is a predominantly Muslim area with Christians forming the minority. Christians in that part of the country have long complained of domination, lack of freedom of worship, settlement and access to land for erecting worship places, as observed in Bishop Ogbonyomi's charges. These problems have disrupted the peaceful coexistence of the people in the area, although dialogue between Muslims and Christians has taken place.

The purpose of this research is to establish and analyse the issues facing the Christians in Northern Nigeria under the episcopacy of Bishop Ogbonyomi.

The research will further aim to establish whether there was any change in the functioning and approach of the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria during the Bishop Ogbonyomi's episcopacy, from 1976 to 1996. If there was a change, the research will uncover what motivated it.

The study of the bishop's charges shows that Islam related issues only started appearing in them in 1985. The research will examine why these issues became a problem to the Christians in Northern Nigeria from that time onward.

The bishop alleged in his charges that some clergy in the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria, as well as some national leaders were corrupt. The research will reveal why the clergy harboured corruption in the church instead of denouncing it.

In addition, the research project seeks to identify the impact of these various issues on the Christians' way of life and with regard to unity and nation building in today's Nigeria.

3. LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The research will be limited to the duration of twenty-one years (21yrs), 1976 to 1996.

The research will further be limited to Northern Nigeria.

Another limitation is the fact that, being based in South Africa, the researcher will not have the opportunity to do field work. The research will thus be based only on written materials.

4. LITERATURE SURVEY

In order to understand the historical background of the churches in Northern Nigeria, the researcher investigated studies that have been conducted into the history of Christianity in the area, at state, national and regional levels. These works include those by E.T.P. Crampton, *The History of Christianity in Northern Nigeria*,³ Pauline Lere, *The Church in West Africa*,⁴ Mamman Daudu and Justice N. Gbule, *An Outline of History of Christianity in West Africa*,⁵ Lamin, Sanneh, *West African Christianity: The Religious Impact*,⁶ and Kalu, Agwu, *The Light and Shades of Christianity in West Africa 1792-1992*.⁷ Though one might acknowledge the effort of these researchers, one should also consider that their works may be limited with regard to the issues facing the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria, as most of them are not indigenous to Northern Nigeria. The people of Northern Nigeria are very reluctant to release information, especially to “outsiders,” and the authors potentially did not obtain full and adequate data. It is sometimes natural that people are careful about what they say and to whom they say it to (especially when it comes to religious issues). At times people are only open to those who

³ Crampton, E.T.P., *Christianity in Northern Nigeria 1st & 2nd Editions*, Zaria (Nig): Gaskiya Corporation Ltd., 1975 and 1976.

⁴ Lere, Pauline M., *The Church in West Africa*, Nigeria: Deka Publications, 2001.

⁵ Daudu, M. and Gbule, Justice N., *An Outline of the History of Christianity in West Africa*. Zaria (Nig): Micsons Press & Publishers, 2000.

⁶ Sanneh, Lamin *West African Christianity: The Religious Impact* London: Longman, 1965.

⁷ Kalu, Agwu *The Light and Shades of Christianity in West Africa (1792-1992)*. Umuahia (Nig): Charity Press, 1978.

live with them, learn their language, culture, get involved in their day-to-day activities and respect them as human beings. Even then, they sometimes cannot trust enough to reveal certain information easily.

The works written by indigenous people of the area are those by Ali Buba Lamido, *The impact of the Church Missionary Society in Wusasa Community*,⁸ and Adamu Baikie, *Wusasa: Souvenir Pictorial Presentation with a Brief historical introduction*,⁹ *Dutsen Wusasa: Gateway to "Bethlehem"-Kindergarten*¹⁰ and *Wusasa Schools: The Humble Beginnings of a Great Venture*.¹¹ The limitation of these research works is that they concentrate mostly on the history of the church in Northern Nigeria and also on the impact of missionaries on the Wusasa community.

The above research mainly traces the historical background of the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria only as part of the broader history of Christianity in West Africa and Nigeria. The topic of this research however focuses exclusively on the history of the church, especially the Anglican Church, in Northern Nigeria. One can hardly find any written work on the issues facing the Anglican Church from the 1970s to the 1990s, making it a virgin field for research. The only resources in this regard are the charges delivered by Bishop Ogbonyomi to the diocesan synod of the diocese of Northern Nigeria from 1976 to 1996. These charges thus form a database for this study. However, the work of Justin S. Ukpog, *The Church in the African State: The Roman Catholic Experience in Nigeria*,¹² and the text by Yusufu Turaki and Bulus Y. Galadima, *The Church in the African State towards the 21st Century: the Experience of Northern Nigeria*,¹³ are also

⁸ Lamido, Ali B., *The Missionary Impact in Wusasa, 1929-1999*, unpublished MA Dissertation to University of Jos (Nig), 2001.

⁹ Baikie, Adamu (ed.) *Wusasa: Souvenir Pictorial Presentation with a Brief historical introduction*. Zaria: Falcon-Jones (Nig) Ltd., 1996.

¹⁰ Baikie, Adamu (ed.) *Dutsen Wusasa: Gateway to "Bethlehem"-Kindergarten*. Lesotho: Epic Printers, Maseru, May 1987.

¹¹ Baikie, Adamu (ed.) *Wusasa Schools: The Humble Beginnings of a Great Venture*. Zaria: Falcon-Jones (Nig) Ltd., 1996.

¹² Ukpog, Justin S., "The Church in the African State: The Roman Catholic Experience in Nigeria" in *Journal of African Christian Thought* Vol. 1, No. 2. Ghana: Akrofi-Christaller Centre, December 1998.

¹³ Turaki, Yusufu and Galadima, Bulus Y., "The Church in the African State towards the 21st Century: The Experience of Northern Nigeria," in *Journal of African Christian Thought* Vol. 1, No. 1. Ghana: Akrofi-Christaller Centre, June 1998.

among the materials that will be used to look at the experiences of other churches in the area of study.

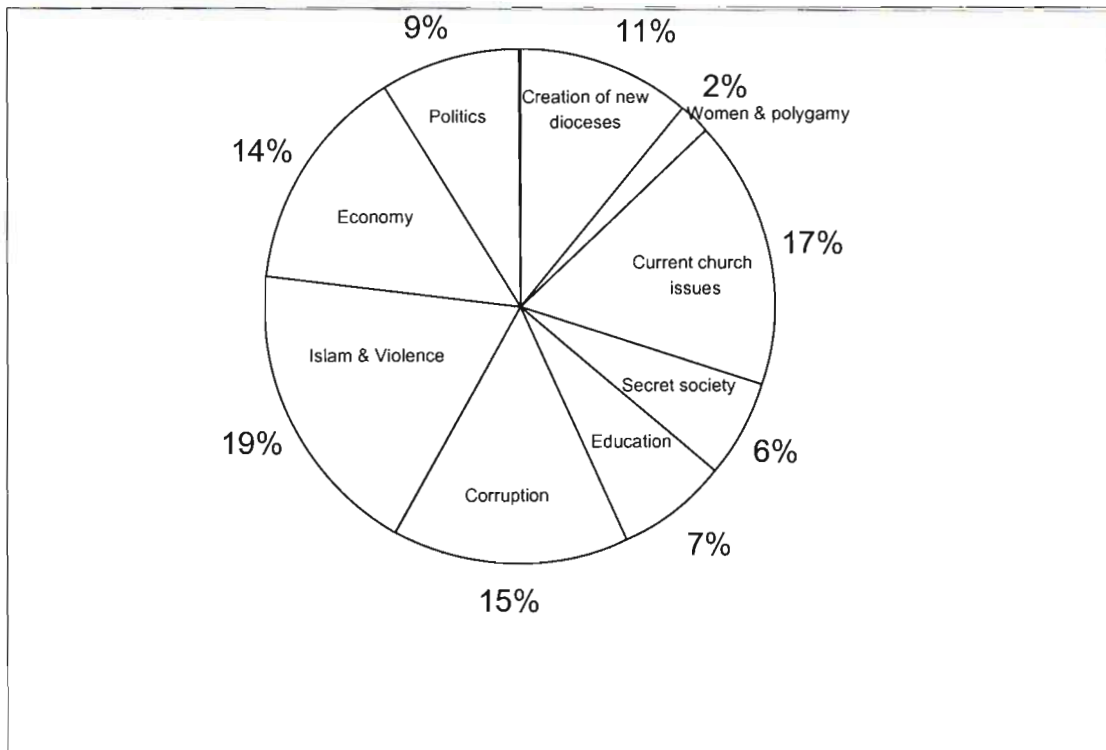
5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research draws on primary sources, secondary sources and from personal experiences, as the researcher is an indigenous Anglican priest working in the area of the study.

The primary source of this research is the collection of Bishop Ogbonyomi's charges delivered to the diocesan synod of Northern Nigeria (Anglican Communion) from 1976 to 1996. There are twenty-one charges in total and were all printed and presented during the diocesan synods. Each charge is approximately forty pages. The twenty-one copies of the charges were collected into a book of four hundred and thirty pages by the St. Michael Anglican Cathedral in Kaduna. Copies of the collected charges are on sale in the Cathedral book shop in Kaduna, while the twenty-one original copies of the charges are kept in the diocesan archives.

Reading through the complete collection of the charges revealed that there were various categories of issues that were a problem to the church in the Northern Nigeria. These categories included the economy, secret societies, corruption, education, ethnic political life, the creation of new dioceses, women ordination and polygamy. The spaces allocated to the categories as measured by the number of lines printed were then counted and overall statistics were calculated in that way. The statistics show that eighty-three per cent of the contents of the charges concentrated on addressing the above issues. Seventeen per cent of the content of the charges concentrated on current church matters such as the movement and preferment of clergy, obituaries and congratulations to either the diocese or to members with regard to official or personal matters. In order to calculate the percentage of the content devoted to each topic in the twenty-one charges, the figures for each year have been added up. The total figures were then divided by twenty-one and

multiplied by one hundred. The percentages are presented in the pie chart below. The statistics of the issues discussed in the charges can be found at Appendix I.



There are certain limitations to this statistical analysis of the charges. For example, there are overlaps in the categories. In addition, the number of lines devoted to an issue may not mean that the issue was of greater importance than other issues which covered less space. The details of some of the issues may have been over-emphasised and others under-emphasised by the bishop. However, the statistics serve as an important tool to guide the research. They provide a rough idea of where the bishop focused his interest and how his interests shifted over the years.

The *Zumunci* (Fellowship) magazine of Kaduna diocese which explains the subdivisions of the diocese of Northern Nigeria into smaller dioceses forms another primary source for this study. Copies of these magazines can be found in the diocesan archives and in the hands of individuals.

The secondary sources are the books on the history of Christianity in Northern Nigeria and West Africa as mentioned above in the literature review. The researcher will also explore the internet for relevant essays or articles written on the topic of the research. The data collected is carefully analyzed to avoid any distortion of the facts. The researcher's personal experience also plays a vital role in the analysis and writing of this research.

6. OUTLINE

The thesis consists of eleven chapters. Chapter one presents the background of and motivation for the study, a statement of the problem of the research, the purpose and limitations of the research and the research methodology. Chapter two examines the historical background of the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria and some selected churches in the area of the study. The churches include the Evangelical Churches of West Africa (ECWA), the Baptist Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN), and the Lutheran Church. Chapter three provides a biography of Bishop Titus E. Ogbonyomi, his charges and how the charges were written, presented and received as fulcrum for the study. Furthermore, the chapter provides additional information on the bishop and on the people's attitude toward the creation of new dioceses in the area. The chapter also examines the bishop's contribution to other Christian organizations. Chapter four centers on the economy of the church and the country. Chapter five deals with education. Chapter six studies the situation concerning corruption in the country and the church in Northern Nigeria. Chapter seven looks at secret societies. Chapter eight examines the politics of ethnicity in the church and in society. Chapter nine looks at the religious crises in Northern Nigeria. Chapter ten deals with women ordination and polygamy. Chapter eleven is the concluding chapter of this research. It provides an interpretation of Bishop Ogbonyomi's charges, recommendations and a conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE ANGLICAN CHURCH AND OTHER CHURCHES IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

2.1 Introduction

Christianity took root in Nigeria in the nineteenth century. The main missionary societies then were the Church Missionary Society (CMS), the Wesleyans (Methodists), the Roman Catholic Mission, the American Baptists and the Presbyterian Mission. Their initial spheres of influence were in Badagri, Lagos, Abeokuta and Calabar from where they gradually moved into the interior. The efforts of these missionaries to evangelize Northern Nigeria in the earlier part of nineteenth century were not made any easier by the British policy excluding them from the northerly emirates. Lugard had promised in his famous speech at the installation of the newly appointed Sultan of Sokoto in March 1903, that his rule would be just and fair and that all people would be free to worship God as they pleased and that government would not interfere with the Muslim religion.¹⁴ The colonial policy of religious non-interference, a pledge of support to the Muslim ruler, and the exclusion of Christian missions from the Muslim areas, created an unhappy relationship between the colonial administration and missions. However, after the Christian missions exerted tremendous pressure on the colonial administration to change its regulatory policies that barred them from entering the Muslim emirates, “the British lifted the embargo in the early 1930s.”¹⁵

The lifting of the embargo and the imposition of peace in later years made it easier for the missionaries to work in the predominantly “pagan” areas. But conditions were still not ideal, because mission work was highly regulated and controlled by the colonial administration. After the end of the colonial rule, it seems that the Nigerian state, under both civilian and military regimes, continued the colonial legacy in terms of religious,

¹⁴ *Annual Report of Northern Nigeria*, 1902, p. 98.

¹⁵ Galadima, Bulus Y. and Turaki, Yusufu “The Church in the African State toward the 21st Century: The Experience of Northern Nigeria” in *Journal of African Christian Thought*, June 1998, p. 45.

cultural and social policies in its dealings with the church. Nevertheless, through practical social work such as educational and medical initiatives, the churches gained strength in Northern Nigeria. This chapter will then focus on the historical background of some of the churches in Northern Nigeria, namely the Anglican Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Baptist Church, the Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA), the Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN) and the Lutheran Church.

2.2.1 The historical background of the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria

The history of the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria goes back to the attempts of the Church Mission Society (CMS) to evangelize the northern part of Nigeria. In 1855, generally considered as the start of the first phase of Christianity in Northern Nigeria, T.J. Bowen of the American Baptist Mission (ABM), sent by the CMS, made an effort to bring Christianity into Northern Nigeria from Southern Nigeria, where it had already been established, but he failed in his endeavour.¹⁶

In 1857, Samuel Ajayi Crowther, a freed slave who was well educated on the Bible and in the teachings of the Qur'an, visited Northern Nigeria and spoke with the ethnic leaders (emirs) he met.¹⁷ With tact and patience Crowther was able to befriend them and sought their protection and support in his mission. By 1871 numerous congregations had been formed in Northern Nigeria, numbering one hundred and forty members in Lokoja, thirty members in Gbebe, thirty-nine members in Kipo and eleven members in Katsa.¹⁸ In addition, he successfully persuaded the emirs of Ilorin, Gwandu and Bida, and the Sultan of Sokoto to receive Arabic Bibles from the CMS as gifts. Crowther also visited and spoke diplomatically with the *Etsu* (emir) of Nupe, Usuman Zaki, making a good impression on him. Crowther hoped that by treating "pagans" and Muslims with respect and kindness, they would be led to read the Bible. Thus he disliked any abusive attack on

¹⁶ Agwu, Kalu *The Light and Shades of Christianity in West Africa (1792-1992)* Umuahia (Nig): Charity Press, 1998, p. 72. See also, Daudu, Mamman and Gbule, Justice Ndidi *An Outline of the history of Christianity in West Africa*. Zaria (Nig): Micsons Press, 2000, p. 72.

¹⁷ Hildebrandt, Jonathan *History of the Church in Africa: A Survey*. England: Africa Christian Press, 1996, p. 100.

¹⁸ Omoyajowo, Akinyele (ed.) *The Anglican Church in Nigeria (1842-1992)*. Lagos (Nig): Macmillan Nigerian Publishing Limited, 1994, p. 84.

their religion,¹⁹ and as such, his approach was seen as being conciliatory. For ten years the first congregations grew numerically. On 29th June 1864 Crowther was consecrated by the Church of England in Canterbury Cathedral as the bishop of Western Equatorial Africa beyond the Queen's dominions.²⁰

The conciliatory work of Crowther continued to bear fruit in the north. Between 1881 and 1883 an invitation came to him from the emirs of Kontagora and Nasarawa, asking him to come and start his missionary activities in their emirates.²¹ However, Crowther, who had benefited from his close contacts with trade and government, was to be disadvantaged during the 1880s as other European nations began to take control in the region. This was the period of growing competition between European nations, known as "the scramble for Africa".²² From this time onward, Crowther's work became more difficult as he had to contend with increasing hostility from the Europeans who refused to recognize his authority.

In 1886 a committee was set up in Manchester to finance any attempt to enter the Sudan for the purpose of evangelism. W. Brook and ten other graduates from Cambridge and Oxford left England in 1889 on a mission to the Sudan (Northern Nigeria). This team, called the "Sudan Party", was sent by CMS. Upon their arrival in Northern Nigeria the same year, they discredited Crowther and his policy of conversion through schools and his conciliatory approach. In addition, they took over the work of the black missionaries under Crowther and restricted him to the lower Niger, with his headquarters at Onitsha, while they took charge of Northern Nigeria with their headquarters at Lokoja. With high enthusiasm, they expected to achieve the conversion of the whole of Northern Nigeria within six months. As part of a new approach to achieve their aim, they upheld indigenous dress and building-styles and taught in the people's vernacular to ensure that northerners embraced Christianity without having to absorb or accept the trappings of western civilization. Surprisingly instead of winning converts, the Hausa people became

¹⁹ Epelle, E.M.T., *Bishop's in the Niger Delta*. Aba, 1964, p. 33.

²⁰ Crampton, P.E.T., (1st Edition), *Christianity in Northern Nigeria*, 1975, p. 21.

²¹ Lamido, Ali B., *The Missionary Impact in Wusasa, 1929-1999*, 2001, p. 5.

²² Ayandele, Emmanuel A., *The Missionary Impact on modern Nigeria 1842-1914: A Political and Social Analysis*. London: Longman Group limited, 1966, p. 32.

hostile to them and all white people, regarding them as Christian missionaries. This mission ended in catastrophe. One by one the party lost its members, either by resignation, invalidation or death.

Crampton described the Sudan Party as

Able young, impetuous, uncharitable and opinionated people who are imbued with the Puritanism and holiness doctrine, which was associated with such evangelical institutions in Britain. Those who came expecting the Anglican Church not to be representative of a great section of the population as it was in England, but to be similar to the fervent groups within the Anglican Church from which they came.²³

This reveals a significant difference between Crowther and his African missionaries and the Sudan Party, not because of their race and nationality, but because of their approach to Christian missionary activity. Crowther and his team aimed at a wider diffusion of Christianity and civilization. They believed that the main task of missionary was to attract people to the mission and that an increase in the depth of personal religion would follow. However, by the death of bishop Crowther in 1891, the gospel had not reached the far parts of Northern Nigeria. Nevertheless, the work begun by Crowther in the Lokoja area made available many opportunities for the proclamation of the gospel message and for the establishment of Anglican congregations in the whole of Northern Nigeria.

Critically looking at the mission activities of the Sudan party, one might say that despite certain problematic issues, their ideas of encouraging indigenous dress and building-styles, and teaching in the vernacular of the people in an unsophisticated society like Northern Nigeria, were innovative and could be commended for the respect this showed toward the indigenous cultures. Their method of evangelism was later followed by a number of protestant missionary societies. This situation reveals how it is almost impossible for religion to escape being involved in or accommodating the cultural setting of a people it comes in contact with, in order to win them to God.

²³ Crampton, E.P.T., (1st Edition), *Christianity in Northern N Nigeria*, 1975, pp. 29-30.

The failure of the Sudan Party and their failure to convert even one person in Northern Nigeria aroused anti-Fulani feelings among Christians in Europe, as they believed that the Fulani were the only obstacle to the Hausas' acceptance of Christianity. To tackle the situation, the study of the Hausa language was planned. In 1892 the Hausa Association was formed in Britain in memory of J.A. Robinson. In the following year, C.H. Robinson, brother to J.A. Robinson, was sent to study Hausa in Tripoli.²⁴ When he completed his studies, he published his brother's translation of Saint Matthew's Gospel in Hausa and then left for Northern Nigeria. He arrived at Lokoja in 1894, where he formed a small party, which travelled with him to Kano. On arrival at Kano, he celebrated Holy Communion on Christmas day.²⁵ Robinson spent only three months in Kano and went back to Britain through Lokoja never to return. When he arrived at Britain, he gave a glorious account of the welcome and hospitality given to them in Northern Nigeria, adding that the Muslims of the north would easily be converted to Christianity.²⁶ The report helped to boost the mission of the CMS to Northern Nigeria.

In the same year (1894), one Mallam Sanda, son of the Sultan of Sokoto, came into contact with the Reverend Paul during his routine royal visit to Bida and invited him to go on a missionary tour to the Sokoto, Zaria and Adamawa emirates.²⁷ The invitation was readily accepted and the fruit of Paul's work in the area was to sow the seed of Christianity in the emirates. Bishop Ogbonyomi pointed out that

Paul was formerly a Muslim and a persecutor of Christians. He came across the writing of the late Canon S.A. Mama and while he was reading, some inscriptions so fascinated him that he (Paul) desired to learn more about them. It was in his quest to understand more that he was won to Christ, and at his baptism he took the name Paul.²⁸

During the last years of the nineteenth century, forward-looking evangelists in Europe and America began to be concerned about lack of missionary activity in the "Sudan" belt

²⁴ Crampton, E. P. T., (1st Edition) *Christianity in Northern Nigeria*, 1975, p. 37.

²⁵ Lamido, Ali B., *The Missionary Impact in Wusasa, 1929-1999*, 2001, p. 7. See also, Crampton E.P.T. *Christianity in Nigeria*, 1975, p. 37.

²⁶ Omoyajowo, Akinyele (ed.) *The Anglican Church in Nigeria (1842-1992)*, 1994, p. 86.

²⁷ Ogbonyomi, E., Titus "The Second Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1983" in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 125.

²⁸ Ogbonyomi, E., Titus "The Second Session of the Tenth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1986" in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 179.

of Africa. Just after the declaration of the British Protectorate, the Conference of the Evangelical Missionary Society (EMS) predicted that unless the gospel was taken to the indigenous people of Northern Nigeria within a few years, they would go over to Islam.²⁹ In 1897 a small party, including W.R.S. Miller went to Tripoli, where many Hausa people were living, to study the Hausa language. The disturbances in the lands to the east of Northern Nigeria had caused the Hausa pilgrims from Nigeria to travel through Tripoli and Egypt to reach Mecca. At Tripoli, Miller encountered a thirteen year old boy called Abdul Majid, who was on his way to Mecca and facilitated the boy's journey. When Abdul returned from Mecca, Miller invited him to visit England. On his return from England, he followed Miller to Zaria on mission work in Northern Nigeria in the following years. Abdul Majid founded the first Christian families among the Hausa-Fulani.³⁰

In 1899, a team of five dedicated European missionaries headed by Bishop Tugwell left Liverpool for Northern Nigeria.³¹ They included W.R.S. Miller, Bishop Tugwell, Mr. Burgin, Dudley Ryder and A.E. Richardson.³² This group arrived at Lagos in the Christmas week of the same year, and proceeded northward to Jebba. From Jebba the band continued their journey up north toward Kano. On their way to Kano, they had a brief stop-over in Zaria. The emir of Zaria, Kwassau was very friendly toward them and requested that they stay in Zaria. However they could not because their target was Kano.³³ The missionaries arrived at Kano on Good Friday in April 1900. However to their disappointment, the emir of Kano, Alhaji Aliyu, gave them three days within which to leave his emirate. Miller reported the Emir as saying,

Start a school? No. We have our own and our children are taught the Holy Qu'ran. Medical work? No. Our medicine is in the Holy Qu'ran and the name of Allah! We don't want you, you can go. I give you

²⁹ Crampton, E. P. T., (1st Edition) *Christianity in Northern Nigeria*, 1975, p. 37.

³⁰ Miller, W.R.S., *Audu: A Hausa Boy* London, 1904. See also A. Kirk Greene "An Abiding Memorial", *Nigeria* No. 75, December 1962, p. 37. He became known as Audu. One of his daughters became the wife of Doctor R. A. B., Dikko the first Northern Nigerian doctor.

³¹ Baikie, Adamu (ed.) *Wusasa: Souvenir Pictorial Presentation with a Brief historical introduction*. Zaria: Falcon-Jones (Nig) Ltd., 1996, p.3.

³² Baikie, Adamu (ed.) *Dutsen Wusasa: Gateway to "Bethlehem"-Kindergarten* Lesotho: Epic Printers, Maseru, May 1987, p. 22.

³³ Miller, W.R.S., *Reflections of a Pioneer*. London: CMS, 1936, p. 39.

three days to prepare, a hundred donkeys to carry your loads back to Zaria and we never wish to see you here again.³⁴

The team had no other alternative but to withdraw to Zaria where they had a stop-over. In fact, considering the way in which the north was administered at that time, the missionaries were rather lucky to have escaped with their lives. Ayandele described the missionaries' move from Zaria to Kano, as "a foolhardly action"³⁵ because there was plenty of work for them to do in and around Zaria. Miller, one of the team, saw it as "a colossal blunder".³⁶ Long afterward he (Miller) wrote questioning whether their mission in the north was "timeous or whether the real opportunity had already gone."³⁷

On their return from Kano to Zaria, Kwassau, the emir of Zaria was no longer prepared to have them in Zaria, because he had had second thoughts about the wisdom of his friendship with missionaries. In another development, the trip made by the missionaries to Kano greatly embarrassed Lugard who first heard about it from the British newspapers. Lugard had earlier warned the missionaries not to enter Muslim areas where government could not offer them help. As the missionaries were packing and were uncertain where to go, a message came from Colonel Cole who was in charge of the British expedition to take over Hausa country, commanding them to proceed to where the British army was encamped near Girku, a town situated on the river bank south-east of Zaria.³⁸ On their arrival at Girku, they were well received by the British army officer and by the inhabitants of the town. In Girku Miller started the "Three-in-one" (Church, School and Hospital) system of evangelism in the Northern Nigeria.³⁹ However, Kwassau continued to pressurise them to leave his territory, becoming so exasperated with them that he

³⁴ Anthony, Kirk-Greene "...an abiding memorial" in Gaiya, Musa A.B. *A Portrait of A saint: The Life and times of Pa Yohanna Gowon*, (d. 1973), 1998, p. 34.

³⁵ Ayandele, Emmanuel A, *The Missionary Impact on modern Nigeria 1842-1914: A Political and Social Analysis*, 1966, p. 30.

³⁶ CMS. G3/A9/1901 No. 40, *Miller to Baylis*, 1 April 1901.

³⁷ Miller, W.R.S., *Reflection of a Pioneer*, 1936, p. 13.

³⁸ Miller, W.R.S., *Reflection of a Pioneer*, 1936, p. 39.

³⁹ Baikie, Adamu (ed.) *Wusasa: Souvenir Pictorial Presentation with a Brief historical introduction*, 1996, p. 3.

secretly had their huts burned down.⁴⁰ Lugard then ordered the missionaries to move out of Girku immediately, upon which they relocated to Loko.

Questions that arise out of this are: How far did Lugard and his successors honour and interpret the pledge of non-interference with Muslims' areas? Was the pledge a help or a hindrance to the Christian mission in Northern Nigeria? It was unfortunate that Tugwell and his party's journey to Kano caused embarrassment to Lugard. The fact that they came to the north at the same time as the military caused apprehension among the emirs, who were already unfriendly and suspicious, led Lugard to advise them not to go beyond areas where government could afford them protection. The missionaries were then advised to go to the pagan areas of the north and avoid the Muslim areas.

Lugard may be justified in the action he took in prohibiting missionary enterprise in Muslim areas, because of the religious susceptibilities of the emirs of which he was already aware. He was also aware of the danger of the exciting ill feelings among the emirs, who had expressed fears that the British were contemplating forcible interference with their religion and could impose Christian rule in their territories.

In 1905, the mission was transferred back to Zaria city on the invitation of the emir and with the consent of Lugard. Unfortunately, Ryder had died in Girku through a severe attack of dysentery. Richardson also had taken ill and was sent home, while Burgin had returned to Lagos and later also returned to Britain.⁴¹ Only Miller and Bishop Tugwell remained in Girku, not discouraged despite the set-backs to their mission, for they believed that God used death as well as life for the furtherance of His (sic) causes.⁴²

The missionary work of the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria increased and was divided into four stations, Lokoja, Nupe, Bauchi and Hausa Land, with four supervisors. T. E. Alvarez was in charge of Lokoja. W.A. Thompson headed work in Nupe land

⁴⁰ Ayandele, Emmanuel *The Missionary Impact on modern Nigeria 1842-1914: A Political and Social Analysis*, 1966, p. 134.

⁴¹ Miller, W.R.S., *Reflection of a Pioneer*, 1936, p. 40.

⁴² Olatayo, D.I., *ECWA: The Root, Birth and Growth*. Ilorin: An Ocare Publisher (Nig) Ltd., 1993, p. 2.

(Bida), which expanded the mission work to Katsa. C. H. Wedgwood looked after the Bauchi Plateau and the Angas area with a station at Kabwir, and Walter Miller was in Hausa land with his headquarters at Zaria.⁴³ He was later joined by Norman Cook who was in charge of the medical mission. Cook supervised the building of hospitals at Wusasa (1930), Funtua (1931), Maska (1932), and Chafe (1933), which later became centres for evangelism. Earlier, medical care that had been introduced by the missionaries in the area had encountered some problems. Doctors and sisters had to disprove stories often told about them. One of these stories was that after each operation the doctors and sisters ate whatever was removed from the body of the patient. As a result of these stories, “the first Fulani woman in-patient that was admitted in Wusasa hospital was guarded by her husband, sitting beside her bed day and night, fully armed with spear, bow and arrows ready to protect her if necessary and watching all treatments.”⁴⁴

The mission centre in Zaria city increased in size and scope and it became evident that its position in the city was a hindrance rather than a help to its work, because of the restrictions placed on it by the government and the native authority.⁴⁵ This was the reason for the quest for a new and spacious site outside the city, at Wusasa. From Wusasa the gospel was taken to other places like Kano, Katsina, Sokoto, and especially to the “Maguzawa” people scattered widely in Northern Nigeria.⁴⁶ The educational services begun by Miller developed into St. Paul’s secondary school, one of the leading schools in Northern Nigeria. There was also a sub-station at Kafanchan, from where the CMS spread the gospel among the people of Kaje (Bajju), Jaba (Ham), and Kataf (Atyap) among others.

Through the four mission stations, the Anglican Church expanded in Northern Nigeria and was divided into the Kano and the Jos Archdeaconries. These two archdeaconries were placed under the supervision of the Lagos diocese, as the “Northern Nigeria

⁴³ Lamido, Ali B., *The Missionary Impact in Wusasa, 1929-1999*, 2002, p. 8.

⁴⁴ *Minutes of the Committee of St. Bartholomew’s Church Archives Wusasa 1955*, p. 3.

⁴⁵ Baikie, Adamu (ed.) *Wusasa: Souvenir Pictorial Presentation with a Brief historical introduction*, 1996, p. 3.

⁴⁶ Crampton, E.P.T., (1st Edition) *Christianity in Nigeria* 1975, p.118.

Board.”⁴⁷ The missionary work flourished so well that it was proposed (at a 1924 meeting held at Zaria, chaired by the bishop of Lagos) that the two archdeaconries be made into a separate diocese for the north, separate from the Lagos diocese.⁴⁸ In hope of creating a separate diocese for Northern Nigeria, Bishop Melville Jones consecrated A.W. Smith and sent him to take charge of Zaria, Kaduna, and Kano. The intention of Bishop Jones was to develop the four centers (Lokoja, Hausa land, Nupe, and Bauchi) into a strong diocese of Northern Nigeria.

However, a lack of adequate funds to pay for the missionaries needed for the stations at Bauchi led the CMS to hand them over to the Sudan United Mission (SUM). The remaining stations were supervised by Smith from 1925 to 1942 and by N. Sherwood Jones from 1944 to 1951.⁴⁹ When it was clear that the long awaited diocese of Northern Nigeria would be created, Bishop Leslie Gordon Vining, first Archbishop of West Africa, contacted Rev. John Earnest Llewellyn Mort in United Kingdom in a letter saying;

We want you to come and lay the foundations of a new diocese of Northern Nigeria. You will lead a comparative handful of priests (twelve in number) and some church workers (forty Lay Readers), just few churches and congregations separated by great distances scattered over an area of approximately the size of France, in the midst of a Muslim and “pagan” population. No bishop’s house, no bishop’s car, as yet no bank account, but no doubt the people would rally to help you in every possible way, and you would find faith and enthusiasm for the building of the new diocese.⁵⁰

In 1954 the diocese of Northern Nigeria was pronounced and inaugurated, on 30th January, with Bishop John E.L. Mort, who had been consecrated on 3rd January, as its first bishop.⁵¹ The population of converts in Northern Nigeria at the time was eleven thousand eight hundred and ninety-one (11,891), with only one thousand of them

⁴⁷ *Zumunci (Fellowship): A Magazine of the Anglican Diocese of Kaduna* Vol. 1, No. 6. USSN 0794-179X. Kaduna (Nig): Sooji Press Limited, April 1991, p. 19.

⁴⁸ Omoyajowo, Akinyele (ed.) *The Anglican Church in Nigeria (1842-1992)*, 1994, p. 112.

⁴⁹ Omoyajowo, Akinyele (ed.) *The Anglican Church in Nigeria (1842-1992)*, 1994, p. 112.

⁵⁰ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Eighth Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1979”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 55.

⁵¹ *Constitution of the Diocesan Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Kaduna*, p. 4. See also Omoyajowo, Akinyele (ed.) *The Church in Nigeria (1842-1992)*, 1994, p. 112. And *Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) Order of Service of the Inauguration of the Ecclesiastical Province of Kaduna*. Kaduna (Nig): Majiyebo International Printers Ltd, 2003, p. 33.

indigenous people.⁵² The rest were either Igbo or Yoruba people who came for business or railway work in Northern Nigeria. When Bishop Mort arrived at Zaria, he had no permanent abode for three years. He moved from Kano to Jos and from Jos to Zaria until the diocesan board decided that since the headquarters of the then Northern region was at Kaduna, the diocesan headquarters should also be there.⁵³ In 1969 Bishop Mort had to resign as a result of his wife's sickness, after which Bishop Festus Oluwole Segun (who was consecrated in Lagos on 5th April, 1970) succeeded him as the second bishop of the diocese of Northern Nigeria. On 6th February, 1975 he was transferred to the Lagos diocese and was succeeded later that year by Bishop Titus Eyiolorunsefunmi Ogbonyomi, who was consecrated in Lagos on the Feast of Saint Peter, 29th June as the third bishop of the diocese of Northern Nigeria.

2.2.2 The Roman Catholic Church

As far back as 1710/1711, Fr Carlo de Genova of Rome, in his attempt to introduce the gospel in Northern Nigeria, travelled overland from Tripoli with the aim of starting a mission station in Borno. However, he died in Katsina.⁵⁴ After this attempt, it took a long time for the Roman Catholic Mission (RCM) to continue its mission work in Northern Nigeria. In 1907, the RCM resumed work at Lokoja. From Lokoja, Father O' Waller led a party to the far north with the aim of establishing a mission among the Akwe tribe at Shendam, near Wase. Furthermore, some Roman Catholic members from Southern Nigeria, who moved northward to Sabon Gari and other new towns, began to hold services in their locations. They were followed by visiting Fathers and wherever their number was justified, a station was built.

In the early missionary activities, most of the missionary societies had an understanding that they were not to enter areas where another missionary society was already working.

⁵² Omoyajowo, Akinyele (ed.) *The Church in Nigeria (1842-1992)*, 1994, p. 112.

⁵³ *Zumunci (Fellowship): A Magazine of the Anglican Diocese of Kaduna* Vol. 1, No. 6. USSN 0794-179X Kaduna (Nig): Sooji Press Limited, April 1991, p. 19.

⁵⁴ Hair, P.E., *Guide to the Records of Early West African Missions*, J.R.A. Vol. 1 Fas. 2, p. 130. See also, Gray, Richard *Christian Traces and a Franciscan Mission in the Central Sudan 1700-1711*; J.A.H. VIII (1967) pp. 383-393. Crampton P.E.T., (1st Edition), *Christianity in Northern Nigeria* Zaria: Gaskiya Corporation Ltd, 1975, p. 15.

The RCM did not respect this principle of the comity of the missions and felt free to move and work anywhere they chose to. Their action was resented, especially where the Protestants felt that the RCM were attracting many of “their” people.⁵⁵ The RCM missionaries were the pioneers in areas around Shendam and parts of *Sardauna princie*. They also had stations at Bajju, Atyp, Kagoro and Kafanchan areas through which they evangelised the southern part of Kaduna state.

The RCM strategy of evangelism was through the provision of Catholic schools for the children of their converts. Furthermore, while other missionary societies condemned beer drinking, they did not. It seems that the RCM did not set out to attack all pagan customs and convert only individuals who would break away from their environment and be subjected to a long period of training before being accepted into the church. Instead they worked to identify themselves with the elders and to baptize their children who attended the Catholic schools. With this simple practical approach, they got significant number of adherents in Northern Nigeria and soon vicariates and prefectures were organized. The first prefecture was that of Niger, with its headquarters at Lokoja, created in 1884. In 1929 the whole area north of the Rivers Niger and Benue was detached from the Niger and called the prefecture of Northern Nigeria.⁵⁶ In 1934 this prefecture was divided into the two prefectures of Kaduna and Jos. The work in these prefectures was carried out by Fathers of the Society of African Missions (SMA). Augustinian Fathers worked in the Adamawa and Borno Provinces, while American Dominican Fathers worked in the Kaduna prefecture. In 1953, the Dominicans were given charge of the apostolic prefecture for the Sokoto and Katsina Provinces, carved out of the archdiocese of Kaduna.⁵⁷ In the southern parts of Kaduna and Jos, the work was carried out by the Holy Ghost Fathers. In this way the Roman Catholic Church spread in Northern Nigeria.

⁵⁵ Crampton, E.P.T., (2nd Edition) *Christianity in Nigeria*, 1976, p. 151.

⁵⁶ Crampton, E.P.T., (2nd Edition) *Christianity in Nigeria*, 1976, p. 159.

⁵⁷ Kenny, Joseph “Nigeria and Ghana” in Denis, Philippe (ed.) *Dominicans in Africa: A History of the Dominican Friars in Sub-Sahara Africa* Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2003, p. 114. They were also involved in medical work in the hospitals opened at Yelwa in 1958, Funtua in 1960 and Malumfashi sisters’ dispensary, in 1962.

2.2.3 Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA)

The establishment of this church is owed to the missionary work of the Sudan Interior Mission (SIM). The SIM was an interdenominational society with branches in Canada, the U.S.A., Britain and Australia. Their objective was the evangelisation of the indigenous people of the Sudan. The mission was aware from the start that these people were coming under Muslims' influences, so its aim was to reach them rather than the long-established Muslim communities of Hausa land.⁵⁸

In 1901 these missionaries arrived at Pategi in Northern Nigeria to start work. Among them were Bringham, Antony, Taylor and Banfield.⁵⁹ In 1910 they opened their first mission station at Kwoi in Southern Kaduna, headed by F.E. Hein. In 1921 the second station was opened at Kurmin Musa by T. Allen and the third station was established at Kagoro by T. Archibald.⁶⁰ Pategi, though a Muslim's emirate, was congenial for missionary activity and it was the site of SIM station in Northern Nigeria and was used as a base for other operations launched in favourable areas as the resources of the mission increased. In 1935 other stations were established in Kukar in Borno Province and in 1938 the mission opened a station at Gashua among the Bade people. Furthermore, in 1951 it opened another station at Gadaka among the Ngamo people and in 1952 an additional station at Garin Maje among other Ngamo and Ngizim people.⁶¹ The mission also expanded to other parts of Borno such as Buni, Tadi, Kukawa, Hildi, Biu and Maiduguri. In 1954 these congregations were organised into the Association of Evangelical Churches of West Africa. The missionaries also moved their work to Kabba,

⁵⁸ Crampton, E.P.T., (2nd Edition) *Christianity in Nigeria*, 1976, p. 46.

⁵⁹ Daudu, Mamman and Gbule, Justice Ndidi *An Outline of the history of Christianity in West Africa*. Zaria (Nig): Miscons Press, 2000, p. 75.

⁶⁰ Turaki, Yusufu *The British Colonial Legacy in Northern Nigeria: A Social Ethical Analysis of the Colonial and Post-Colonial Society and Politics in Nigeria*. Jos: Challenge Press, 1993, p. 11. Kwoi and Kurmin Musa are both in Jabaland. From these three stations the mission carried out itineration, evangelization, church planting and establishment of out-stations. The Kwoi station served the Jaba, Kagoma, Yeskwa and Koro. Kurmin Musa served the Jaba of Kachia, Bajju and other ethnic groups in Kachia district as far as beyond Kufana. Kagoro was the largest station of the SIM in Southern Kaduna, so it served the Kagoro, Atyap, Moroa, Bajju, Kaningkon, and Kafanchan among others. Later, Zonkwa and Samaru Kataf became sub-stations.

⁶¹ Evangelical Church of West Africa <http://www.reformiert-online.net/adressen/detail.php?id=1436&lg=eng> 5/7/2005.

Biliri and Kaltungo. By the year 1961 there were thirty-three SIM stations in the north in areas like Kano, Katsina and Sokoto provinces.

They placed most of their emphasis on the teaching of the Bible and on total abstinence from smoking, dancing and the drinking of alcoholic beverages. Baptism was meant only for adults through immersion. Like other missionary bodies, the SIM also used education and health services as strategy for evangelism. The Association of Evangelical Churches of West Africa formed by this mission later drew up a constitution and registered with the government of Nigeria as the Evangelical Church of West Africa in 1956.⁶² This church spread and has a good number of adherents in Northern Nigeria.

2.2.4 Baptist Church

The Baptist Missionary Society, in their bid to evangelise Nigeria, sent John Clarke and G.K. Prince (a doctor), from Jamaica to the Niger mission of the CMS. After fourteen months they returned and persuaded their church that the plan to evangelise the Niger could proceed.⁶³ The work of the Baptist Church in Nigeria could be seen as the fruit born from the activities of missionaries from the American Convention in Southern Nigeria. This is because the first Baptist congregation in Northern Nigeria was formed by southern Baptists who went to the north to work. At the end of World War II, a group of Yoruba Baptists was meeting in Jos, frequently visited by a minister from Ogbomoso. On one of the minister's trips back home, he came across a Yoruba Baptist congregation in Kaduna who presented him with eighteen candidates for baptism in the river Kaduna in 1920.⁶⁴ In Zaria, there was already a Baptist congregation that had been founded by M.A. Adediran in 1913. The Baptist mission among the indigenous people of the Zaria and Niger Provinces achieved considerable successes and these churches were later grouped into associations which altogether formed the Northern Conference of the Nigerian Baptist Convention (NBC).

⁶² Olatayo, David quoted in *Hunter, Op., Cit.*, p. 246. See also *Nigerian Herald* 3rd Oct. 1975, pp. 8-9.

⁶³ Brian, Stanley *The History of the Baptist Missionary Society (1791-1992)* Great Britain: Biddles Limited, Surrey, 1992, p. 10.

⁶⁴ Crampton, E.P.T., (2nd Edition) *Christianity in Nigeria*, 1976, p. 162.

The Baptist Church practised adult baptism through total immersion and had a congregational pattern of church government. Each church is said to have the liberty to interpret, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, its teachings and administer its laws. However, in 1974 a second Baptist Church was formed within the existing Baptist Church, after a clash over leadership. The second Baptist Church was named the Emmanuel Baptist Church.

2.2.5 Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN)

One Karl Kumn, a German, and his wife Lucy, were concerned with missionary work in the Sudan. Kumn had earlier made some effort to penetrate to the Sudan from the south of Egypt. However, the German committee under whose auspices he was serving did not encourage pioneering into new areas. In 1902 Kumn left for England where he and some friends founded the Sudan Pioneer Mission (SPM). This mission was later known as the Sudan United Mission (SUM).⁶⁵ SUM was an interdenominational mission with the objective of evangelising the people of Northern Nigeria. In 1904 Kumn went to Tripoli to study Hausa. In Tripoli he met with C.L. Temple from the Bauchi Province of the Jos Plateau. Temple, on his return to Nigeria from Tripoli, invited Kumn to work among his people.

Later the SUM decided to send a party to investigate the possibilities of work in the Benue valley and the highlands further north. The party consisted of Kumn, Bateman, Burt and Maxwell.⁶⁶ They arrived Lokoja in August and Kumn went to Zungeru to discuss matters with Lugard who recommended that they could start work at Wase, the headquarters of a small Muslim emirate just outside the mountainous area of Jos Plateau. Work was not successful at Wase, and they were asked to desist from continuing in the town as their emir objected to the presence of Christian missionaries.⁶⁷ The failure of this first attempt at Wase prevented the missionaries from getting settled among one

⁶⁵ Crampton, E.P.T., (1st Edition) *Christianity in Nigeria*, 1975, p. 44.

⁶⁶ Crampton, E.P.T., (1st Edition) *Christianity in Nigeria*, 1975, p. 44.44.

⁶⁷ Great Britain, Parliament Papers, 1907 LIV, *Report on Northern Nigeria for 1905-06* (cmd. 3285-3), p. 119.

particular ethnic group, so they spread in different directions. All the same, by the time that the SUM celebrated its Golden Jubilee in 1954, thousands of church members had been drawn into churches in Northern Nigeria through their efforts.⁶⁸ Later on in 1904 the SUM founded the Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN),⁶⁹ dominant in areas like Adamawa, Yola and Jos Plateau.

2.2.6 Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria

The Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria was initiated in 1911 when a young Danish medical doctor commissioned by the SUM Danish branch, sailed up the Benue River looking for a place that had not heard the gospel of Christ.⁷⁰ The desire of the mission was to counter the advance of Islam from North Africa into the Sudan region. At the Edinburgh missionary conference in 1910, the issue of the Sudan had been discussed and it was agreed that mission stations should be built across the vast Sudan area to serve as a demarcation to halt the southward advance of Islam.

The SUM assigned the Yola Province of Adamawa to the Danish Sudan Mission (DSM). The DSM was independent and free to carry on its own work as a Danish Lutheran Mission (DLM) and was also responsible for its finances and staff. The mission developed over the years, spreading the gospel message in Adamawa and in the central part of Saradauna Province in Northern Nigeria.

2:3 Conclusion

This chapter has briefly outlined at the history of some the churches in Northern Nigeria. One would expect that Christian missions could operate freely in Northern Nigeria, once the colonial administration had advised them to occupy the non-Muslim areas. This was

⁶⁸ Crampton, E.P.T., (1st Edition) *Christianity in Nigeria*, 1975, p. 146.

⁶⁹ Minchakpu, Obed *Bomb Blast Damages Nigerian Church: Church of Christ suffers \$10 million in property losses during past years*. [Http://jmm.aaa.net.au/articles/480.htm](http://jmm.aaa.net.au/articles/480.htm) 19/05/06.

⁷⁰ Edward, Ishaya I., *A Search for Identity: A Historical Review and Critical Analysis of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria*, Unpublished MA Dissertation to the Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary, St. Paul Minnesota USA, 1984, p. 50.

not the case because the sources reveal that their activities were highly regulated, restricted and monitored.⁷¹ This caused conflicts and controversies between the Christian missions and the colonial administration. The missions had to apply for permission from the government to operate in any area. The opposition to the presence of Christian missions in the non-Muslim areas appeared to be very strong among British political officers and less so among the Muslims rulers and Muslims living in the area. The colonial administrators seem to have assumed that they knew the wishes of the people better than their traditional leaders and rulers. Perhaps the colonial administrators also feared antagonizing the Muslim rulers because they wanted to avoid open conflict. However, despite all regulations and restrictions, the Christian missionary work in Northern Nigeria had great success in establishing the different denominations in the area. It can thus be argued that Christianity has made a substantial impact in this Muslim dominated area.

⁷¹ The early correspondence between the CMS and the Colonial Government: NAK: ZARPROF ACC. No.7, C. 7/1919. See also, *General Reports on Missionaries' activities from 1939-1049*; NAK: ZARPROF ACC. No. 31 C. 19/1939. *Mission at Kagoro SIM*; NAK: ZARPROF ACC. 14 c. 41, 1929-1934. *Preaching in Public Places: General Religious Toleration*: NAK: ZARPROF ACC. 255 C. 4082, 1930-1933.

CHAPTER THREE

THE LIFE OF BISHOP OGBONYOMI, HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER DENOMINATIONS AND THE CREATION OF NEW DIOCESES IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

3.1 Introduction

The life of Bishop Ogbonyomi and his episcopal work in the diocese of Northern Nigeria revolve around the history of that diocese. His achievements were born out of the desire to educate, inform, inspire and encourage the population. The bishop served in the area over a period of fifty-one years, twenty-one of which were spent in the episcopate. This chapter will focus on the bishop's biography, his relationship with other denominations and his reaction to the creation of dioceses out of the diocese of Northern Nigeria.

3.2 Bishop Ogbonyomi's life and work

Bishop Titus Eyiolorunsefunmi was born on 10th December 1926 to Pa Jeremiah Ogbonyomi and Sarah Omoye in the town of Kabba, in the Bumu area of Kogi state. He grew up helping his father and mother on the farm. Bishop Ogbonyomi was good in sports especially the hundred meter sprint race. He also sang and composed hymns and was a popular member of St' Andrew's church choir in his home town.⁷² He trained as a teacher, but when he resolved to embrace the ordained ministry, he was admitted into Melville Hall to train as a catechist.⁷³ After catechist training he proceeded to priesthood training at the same institution and was deaconed on 18th December 1955 at the St. Paul's Anglican Church in Jos and sent to Holy Trinity Anglican Church, in Kano to work as a deacon. He was ordained as a priest on 27th May 1956 at St. George's Anglican Church, in Sabon Gari in Zaria, and continued to serve as a curate at the Holy Trinity Anglican

⁷² Ogunyemi O., Kaduna, 13th December 2005.

⁷³ Adekunle, S. O., "The Man of Destiny: His 21 Years in the Episcopate" in *The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) Kaduna Diocese: Bishop's Charges Delivered (1976-1996)*, 1996, p. V.

Church in Kano until 1958. In May 1958 he was transferred to be the vicar in charge of St. Luke's Anglican Church in Jos.

The journey continued, when his ministry took a dramatic turn from the civil pulpit to the military pulpit. He was commissioned to the chaplaincy of the Queen's Own Nigeria Regiment, where he rose to the rank of a Lieutenant Colonel and was given the headship of the regiment in 1973.⁷⁴ It was during his service as a chaplain in the army that he was elected the bishop of the diocese of Northern Nigeria in 1975.⁷⁵ His election as a bishop was a surprise to many people who knew his humble roots, and some doubted the credibility of the election. However, they concluded that it was God's calling for him to be in the church ministry.⁷⁶

Bishop Ogbonyomi was a pioneer in various ways: he was the first African to be commissioned into the Nigerian Army Chaplaincy, the first Nigerian to serve as chaplain to the Nigerian Army in the Congo 1960 to 1961, the first Nigerian to head the Protestant section of the Nigeria chaplaincy, the first Nigerian to be elected and consecrated bishop from the Nigerian Army Chaplaincy and the first Northerner to be consecrated the bishop of the diocese of Northern Nigeria.

Bishop Ogbonyomi served in the ordained ministry for fifty-one years. As a bishop he served the church in Northern Nigeria for twenty-one years. His role in the church came to an end on 14th December 1996, during a one day valedictory synod. Apart from the bishop's five years assignment while serving as a chaplain to the Armed Forces in the Congo, Lagos and Enugu, he spent the whole of his ordained life in Northern Nigeria, rotating from Kano to Jos before finally making Kaduna his second home.

Bishop Ogbonyomi did not only serve the church as a bishop, he also served the entire Christian community in Kaduna state because he was appointed the chairman of the

⁷⁴ Adekunle, S. O., "The Man of Destiny: His 21 Years in the Episcopate" in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. V.

⁷⁵ *Constitution of the Anglican Diocese of Kaduna* Kaduna (Nig): Dare Williams Printer, 1980, p. 5.

⁷⁶ Tukura Moses *Interview* Wusasa, 14th December 2005.

Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) from 1980 until his retirement in 1996. He was also appointed a co-signatory to the Northern Education Advisory Council (NEAC).⁷⁷ As a bishop, he wrote and delivered twenty-three charges. He also wrote articles which were published in magazines and other publications, for example, the publication of Archbishop Vining Memorial Cathedral Church, in Ikeja in Lagos, *Secret Cults: The Way Out*,⁷⁸ among others.

During the course of his episcopacy Bishop Ogbonyomi was accused of importing people from the southern parts of the country to come and be leaders over the indigenous people of the north.⁷⁹ It can be accepted that he indeed imported some such of people, but the bishop argued that in the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria during the early years of his episcopacy,

It was hard to find Northerners who were qualified either by experience or by their past records of services for leadership positions in the church. Those (Northerners) who were joined in the ministry with the intention to hold key positions in the church at that time deserted the calling. Ahmadu Ali-Tula who was sent by the church to study for a Bachelor Degree in Divinity (B.D), in London, on his return deserted the calling and took a new profession. S.B.G. Mohammed left the ministry and joined politics. A. Abubakar without the usual six months notice informed his archdeacon he was leaving the ministry and did so immediately.⁸⁰

However, one might say that despite the apparent tendency of the bishop to be sectional and tribal in the aspect of preferment of his clergy, he was a great inspiration as a leader. His belief was that to be a Christian, one must forsake other gods completely and turn with total and absolute loyalty to the one omnipotent God. He had a profound influence on the life of many people and many clergy, especially as a bishop who always speaks out against injustice. Furthermore, he was a man of firm ideas, a strict disciplinarian, an energetic and highly principled achiever. His measured interventions in the affairs of the

⁷⁷ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1977," in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 25.

⁷⁸ Peters, Sola (ed.) *Secret Cults: The Way out* Ikeja Lagos: Pitanprints Limited, 1995

⁷⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Third Session of the Eighth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1981," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 88.

⁸⁰ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Third Session of the Eighth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1981," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 89.

country provided hope for many Nigerians and for the church in Northern Nigeria. He gave his life for the service of God's people and retired without a personal house, so that the church had to rally around and provided an apartment for him and family at his retirement.

3.2.1 The bishop's charges

A bishop's charge is an address delivered by a bishop to his or her diocese in an annual synod. In the charge the bishop raises events and issues within and outside the diocese which concern the church and humanity in general. Furthermore, the bishop challenges the clergy and laity on what may likely be the point of focus of the diocese in the year ahead. The charge is usually more of the nature of an admonitory exhortation than a definite command,⁸¹ though the latter could quite properly be conveyed through the charge as well.

As a bishop, Bishop Ogbonyomi wrote and delivered twenty-three charges. Twenty-one were delivered during normal yearly synods, one was delivered during a special one-day synod in 1986 and one was delivered during his valedictory synod on 14th December 1996. The first charge he delivered as a bishop was to the "first session of the seventh synod of the diocese of Northern Nigeria" on Friday 7th May 1976, during a synod held in St. Michael's Cathedral Church in Kaduna. The last one was delivered during his valedictory synod to the Kaduna Diocese, on 14th December 1996 at the same venue.

During the writing of the charges Bishop Ogbonyomi sometimes had private consultations with his diocesan chancellor and registrar on issues with legal implications. He also contacted clergy who were supervising districts or archdeaconries as well as office holders among the laity for information. He contacted parishioners wherever a synod would be held to get information on the history of their church through interviews

⁸¹ Livingstone, E.A., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* Third Edition, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997, p. 321.

and questionnaires.⁸² Furthermore, Bishop Ogbonyomi conducted other research, using for example newspapers and magazines. In so doing his charges contained the opinions of both the clergy and the laity of the diocese as well as extra-church information. Thus his charges were widely accepted, not only by the members of the Anglican Church, but also by other churches and scholars.

The charges were all delivered on a Friday during each synod. He read them to the synod in English, after which someone translated them briefly in the Hausa language. Adekunle observed that “the delivery of each of the charges usually took the bishop two hours.”⁸³ After the delivery of the charge, important issues touched on in the charge by the bishop were raised by the synod delegates for discussion. The charges were also used as a source of fund-raising for the diocese. The printed charges were customarily launched after the discussion on the issues. The launchings always started with chief and co-chief launchers, followed by the state governor or his representative and other special dignitaries present at the synod, each synod delegate and each district and parish. The remaining copies of the charges were priced and sent to all the parishes in the diocese for congregations to buy. The money gathered was used for the administration of the diocese.

The charges were described as beautiful, thought provoking, topical, appropriate, educative, and well researched and reference books for researchers.⁸⁴ The educative value of the charges motivated the Standing Committee of the Cathedral Church of St. Michael in Kaduna, under the leadership of Venerable Joseph O. Akinfenwa, to compile twenty-one of the charges into a single book for posterity and as a reference book for scholarly work in the future.

⁸² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1989,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 256. According to information after questionnaires were sent out to past Anglican workers in this place (Minna), the Church here was started by railway workers and government officials.

⁸³ Adekunle, S. O., “The Man of Destiny: His 21 Years in the Episcopate” in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. V.

⁸⁴ Adekunle, S. O., “The Man of Destiny: His 21 Years in the Episcopate” in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. V.

3.2.2 Bishop Ogbonyomi and other denominations

The relationship of Bishop Ogbonyomi with other denominations could be said to have been cordial. He was the chairperson of the Christian Association of Nigeria, Kaduna chapter. Archbishop Peter Y. Jatau of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Kaduna made his social centre available to the bishop for hosting his guests from all over Africa when they attended the consecration of the bishops in Kaduna in 1980, when the diocese of Northern Nigeria was split into the dioceses of Kaduna, Kano and Jos.⁸⁵ That might be indication of a good relationship. Furthermore, in Nigeria a bishop is not just seen as the bishop of one denomination, but as a bishop for all the denominations, especially when it comes to the difficult issues facing the Christians in the country. Under the above assertion, and also as the chairperson of the Christian Association Nigeria in that part of the country, Bishop Ogbonyomi generally might have used the term “Christian” in an inclusive way when he addressed issues facing the Christians in the northern part of Nigeria.

3.3 Creation of new dioceses in the diocese of Northern Nigeria and Bishop Ogbonyomi’s reaction

3.3.1 Introduction

The creation of dioceses is sometimes an indication of church growth. However, Bishop Ogbonyomi seemed not to see it in that way. He found it difficult to accept the creation of dioceses out of the diocese of Northern Nigeria, when its congregation could not fully finance the existing one. Eleven per cent of the contents of the charges concentrated on the creation of new dioceses in the diocese of Northern Nigeria. This section will look at the bishop’s reaction on the splitting of the diocese of Northern Nigeria into smaller dioceses.

⁸⁵ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Eighth Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1980,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 70.

3.3.2 Procedures for the creation of a diocese

Before becoming a diocese, the territory to be made the diocese must be a successful mission area. When this has been established, a committee is then set up to make a preliminary study of the diocese to be created and to investigate the opportuneness of this step. The questions to be asked will focus on whether the number of Christians, priests and religious establishments (churches, chapels, schools among others) are sufficiently large to justify the establishment of the proposed diocese. Other aspects that are considered are the reasons for the request for the diocese and the number of towns or settlements included in the territory. The committee is also mandated to find out if there is a city suitable for the episcopal see and the amount of financial resources at the immediate disposal of the bishop, once the diocese is created. There should also be an added sketch, if possible accompanied with a map, indicating the territory of the future diocese.

The committee is also empowered to make enquiries about the composition of the ethnic groups involved in the quest for the diocese. In the past, it was a general rule that a diocese should not include districts whose inhabitants speak different languages or are subject to distinct civil powers.⁸⁶ All the findings of the committee set up for the creation or division of any diocese are subject to the approval of the diocesan bishop of the diocese to be divided and these findings should show that there is need to carve out a new diocese from the existing one.⁸⁷

3.3.3 Creation of new dioceses in Northern Nigeria

The Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria was established through the efforts of the Church Missionary Society (CMS), as seen in chapter two. From the brief background given of the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria, it seems clear that for the Anglican Church in the area to attain the position of a diocese separate from the Lagos diocese,

⁸⁶ "Instructions of Propaganda", 1798, in S.C. de P.F., *Collectanea* Rome: 1907, No. 645.

⁸⁷ *Extract from the Report of Archbishop Advisory Committee which met at All Saints' Church, Asaba (Nig.), 25th May 1961.*

there was a significant growth in membership and geographical spread. Since its inception, the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria and Nigeria as a whole had remained a growing church. The Anglican Church in Nigeria formed part of the Province of West Africa, which was inaugurated on 17th April 1951 by the Archbishop of Canterbury Bishop Geoffrey Fisher, at Freetown in Sierra Leone.⁸⁸ By 1976 the Anglican Church in Nigeria, as Bishop Ogbonyomi observed, “had fifteen out of the seventeen dioceses in the Province of West Africa.”⁸⁹ The bishop added that “that made it easy for the Anglican Church in Nigeria to become a province in 1979 because it had more than the required number of dioceses (five dioceses) to make a province.”⁹⁰ In giving the reasons that motivated Nigeria’s request for a province, the bishop pointed that “with the province, the Anglican Church in Nigeria would gain prestige as an independent church in an independent country and be able to speak as a united body in the country on political, social, religious and other pressing national problems.”⁹¹

The splitting of the diocese of Northern Nigeria into smaller dioceses began with a proposal that sought the creation of a missionary diocese out of the existing one. Bishop Ogbonyomi pointed out that

In a letter dated 10th February 1975 to the provincial synod of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), the diocese of Northern Nigeria reported favourably on some findings for the creation of the proposed missionary diocese, in a motion passed during a one-day special synod on 1st February 1975. The proposal noted that the diocese was confident that what would be left as the existing diocese would be viable.⁹²

Therefore, Bishop Ogbonyomi, who had just been enthroned as the bishop of the diocese on 6th July 1975, was to inherit a diocese that was already about to be divided up. Reacting to the move for the creation of the missionary diocese, Bishop Ogbonyomi

⁸⁸ Omoyajowo, Akinyele (ed.) *The Anglican Church in Nigeria (1842-1992)*, 1994, p. xix.

⁸⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1976,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 3.

⁹⁰ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1976,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 3.

⁹¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1976,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 3.

⁹² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1977,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 24.

stated that he was not informed of the decision that had been taken and the letter that had been written to the provincial synod, before his arrival to the diocese. He said “I only got to know of the letter, the recommendation and the motion passed by the diocese during a provincial synod in August 1975 held at Lagos, when the matter came up in the agenda of the synod.”⁹³ When he was called upon to comment on the letter, he asked the provincial synod for time to think over the advantages and disadvantages of splitting the diocese into two at that time, as it was the first time he heard of the proposal.⁹⁴ Furthermore, he was only recently appointed as the bishop of the diocese and did not yet know the diocese well and thus was reluctant to immediately start dividing it up.

Bishop Ogbonyomi at that time refused to subscribe to the idea of carving out the proposed missionary diocese, though he acknowledged that the division of the diocese into smaller dioceses would lighten his burdens and anxieties of being responsible for a very wide area.⁹⁵ He said “there was no reason or urgency in having the idea rushed through one single session of the synod, while the delegates to that synod knew that the financial position of the diocese was not buoyant enough to split the diocese into two.”⁹⁶

On the financial status of the diocese, the bishop pointed out that

The diocese was indebted to Christian bodies like the Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN), and the Province of West Africa among others, by a sum of twenty-one thousand, five hundred and four naira, forty-seven kobo (N21, 504.47K). Clergy in the diocese were more poorly paid than in other dioceses in the country. Furthermore, there was no bishop’s car and there were no long term diocesan secretariat workers because of poor salaries.⁹⁷

⁹³ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1977,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 24.

⁹⁴ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1977,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 24.

⁹⁵ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1977,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 25.

⁹⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1977,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 24. It seem time was not given to delegates who were representing various parishes during the said special one-day synod, to go back to their people and report the suggestion and decisions that were reached. The parishes should have had opportunity to discuss the implications, including the financial implications of the decisions and then reported back to the synod at the following session. That would provide the chance for the issues to be explained, debated and decided on in all the parishes, districts and the archdeaconry as well as the diocesan committees. After which the outcome could then be put to the provincial synod for ratification

⁹⁷ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1977,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 24.

However, during the synod of 1978 the bishop brought up the matter for discussion among the synod delegates, saying, "I would want to know the views of this synod about the issue of carving out a missionary diocese from the existing diocese of Northern Nigeria."⁹⁸ After some discussion, the synod agreed to carve the missionary diocese out of the existing diocese of Northern Nigeria. The committee originally set up for the previously proposed creation of the missionary diocese was reactivated and given a fresh mandate to work upon.⁹⁹ The Committee acted immediately so that the bishop was able to present their recommendations to the provincial standing committee in the same year, which met after the Lambeth Conference of 1978. The provincial synod unanimously agreed that there was the possibility of creating more than one diocese from the existing diocese of Northern Nigeria.¹⁰⁰ The recommendations were also unanimously approved. Herewith is the full text of the motion on the proposal, as contained in Bishop Ogbonyomi's charge of 1979.

The Standing Committee of the Province of West Africa has at its meeting held on the 1st of November 1978 received and carefully considered the proposal from the diocese of Northern Nigeria presented by the diocesan synod for the re-organisation of the diocese into three dioceses of Kaduna, Kano and Jos. It has approved the proposal for implementation.¹⁰¹

In 1980 the diocese was split into the dioceses of Kaduna, Kano and Jos with two new bishops, Bertram Baima Ayam for the Kano diocese and Samuel Chukuma Nwokorie Ebo for the Jos diocese, elected and consecrated on the 6th of January the same year, while Bishop Ogbonyomi remained the bishop of Kaduna diocese. The two dioceses were inaugurated and the bishops enthroned on 8th January 1980 (Kano diocese) and 10th

⁹⁸ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Third Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1978," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 41

⁹⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Eighth Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1979," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 58.

¹⁰⁰ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Eighth Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1979," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 57.

¹⁰¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Eighth Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1979," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 58. It also notes that the proposed dioceses of Kano and Jos will have to be administered for some years as Auxiliary dioceses and will require assistance from other sources including the province. The initial appointment and provision of bishops for the two dioceses is the responsibility of the province. The diocese of Northern Nigeria is hereby advised to proceed with arrangements that will enable the province be in the position to create the proposed dioceses as early as possible. Motion moved by Bishop J. A. Adetiloye and seconded by Justice S.O. Ighodaro.

January 1980 (Jos diocese).¹⁰² By the creation of the two twin dioceses, the name diocese of Northern Nigeria ceased to exist. The jurisdiction of each of the three dioceses was as follows: the Kaduna diocese comprised the Kaduna, Niger and Sokoto states; the Kano diocese comprised the Kano, Bauchi and Borno states; and the Jos diocese comprised the Plateau, Benue and Gongola states. The bishop observed that “the creation of the dioceses raised some vital issues of concern, which included the need for church workers and money for the administration of the three dioceses.”¹⁰³

Though the splitting of the diocese into three dioceses brought about the above-mentioned concerns, it could be seen as a challenge to the Anglican faithful in Northern Nigeria to move out into more missionary activities in the area. In fact, it seemed to have been a cause of great growth in the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria, because three years later (1983), the creation of another diocese (the Abuja diocese) out of the Kaduna diocese was proposed and Bishop Ogbonyomi was appointed to investigate this possibility. Bishop Ogbonyomi pointed out that “bitter speculations circulated around the diocese, people questioning if the bishop was to move to Abuja and a new bishop be appointed for the Kaduna diocese because the nature of the appointment was misunderstood.”¹⁰⁴ He explained that “the appointment was to see to the working out of all preliminary intricacies, such that would make the immediate take off of the new proposed diocese a reality and also to empower the bishop to acquire portions of land, with their necessary Certificates of Occupancies in the Federal Capital Territory.”¹⁰⁵ On 16th November 1989 Peter J. Akinnola (Canon) was consecrated and was enthroned the bishop of the Abuja diocese during the inaugural service of the diocese on 26th November 1989.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Eighth Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1980,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 70.

¹⁰³ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Eighth Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1980,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 70.

¹⁰⁴ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1983,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 135.

¹⁰⁵ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1983,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 135.

¹⁰⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1990,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 281.

3.4 Evangelism in the Anglican Church

In 1988 during the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Church worldwide declared a decade of evangelism (1991-2000).¹⁰⁷ The decade of evangelism seems to have started a year earlier (1990) in Nigeria, especially in the northern part of the country as Bishop Ogbonyomi pointed out saying, “On 1st January 1990, in the confluence city of Lokoja where some years before, Lord F. Lugard (first Governor of Nigeria 1912-1919) for tactical reasons closed the gates of evangelism to Northern Nigeria, an evangelistic occasion was held, in which thousands of Christians converged to the Holy Trinity Lokoja school-grounds.”¹⁰⁸ The gathering brought together almost every ethnic group in Nigeria. Also present were the Archbishop and Metropolitan of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) Joseph Adetiloye, the registrars of the province of Nigeria and the diocese of Lagos, the bishops of Kaduna, Jos and Kwara, and the retired bishop of Kano as co-sponsors and hosts of the function.¹⁰⁹ The bishop continued by saying, “during the gathering, the great commission of the Lord Jesus Christ as contained in the Gospel of Mark 16: 15-18 was read in thirteen languages, with only English and Igbo not being the native tongues of the people of Northern Nigeria.”¹¹⁰

Bishop Ogbonyomi also added that “in preparation for this great assignment (the decade of evangelism), the Archbishop has on his own, mapped out his strategy, the first step of which was to make an Anglican bishop available at every state capital in the country.”¹¹¹ The move brought about the creation of eight missionary dioceses in Northern Nigeria, namely the dioceses of Minna, Sokoto, Katsina, Kafanchan, Yola, Makurdi, Maiduguri and Bauchi. Their bishops were immediately elected and consecrated at St. Michael’s

¹⁰⁷ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1990,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 284.

¹⁰⁸ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1990,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 284.

¹⁰⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1990,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 284

¹¹⁰ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1990,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 284. The Archbishop delivered an address to the gathering that seemed to give the great commission fresh meaning and which also challenged all the attendants to win Nigeria, the northern part in particular, for Christ.

¹¹¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1990,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 284.

Cathedral, in Kaduna, on 29th April 1990. The bishops were: J.A. Yisa for the Minna diocese, J.A. Idowu-Fearon for the Sokoto diocese, J.S. Kwasu for the Katsina diocese, W.W. Diya for the Kafanchan diocese, C.O. Efobi for the Yola diocese, J.T. Iyangemar for the Makurdi diocese, E.O. Chukuma for the Bauchi diocese and E.K. Mani for the Maiduguri diocese.¹¹²

Still within the decade of evangelism and as part of the move to win the northern part of Nigeria for Christ, on 11th and 12th February 1996 a bishop was consecrated and enthroned as the bishop of the Kabba diocese. The same year, “the Archbishop further proposed the creation of three more missionary dioceses in Northern Nigeria, namely: Kebbi out of the Sokoto diocese, Damaturu out of the Maiduguri diocese and Oturkpo out of the Makurdi diocese.”¹¹³ A committee was set up to investigate the possibility of the establishment of the more dioceses in the area and on 30th November 1996 in the Cathedral Church of Saint James the Great, in Oke-Bola in Ibadan, five (instead of three) bishops were consecrated for five missionary dioceses in Northern Nigeria.¹¹⁴ The bishops and the dioceses as Bishop Ogbonyomi presented in his 1996 charge were, “Tanimu Samari for the Jalingo diocese, Edmund Efoyikeye Akanya for the Kebbi diocese, Yusufu Ibrahim Lumu for the Dutse diocese, Daniel Abu Yisa for the Damaturu diocese and Ityobee Ugede for the Oturkpo diocese.”¹¹⁵ Many dioceses were thus created in Northern Nigeria during the worldwide decade of evangelism.

The same year (1996), a proposal for the division of the Province of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) into smaller provinces was presented. To achieve the aim of the suggestion, a committee was set up to investigate its possibility. The committee came up with a plan to divide the province into seven smaller provinces.¹¹⁶ However, on 20th April 1997 after

¹¹² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1990,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 285.

¹¹³ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1996,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 413.

¹¹⁴ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1996,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 414.

¹¹⁵ St. James the Great Cathedral Church *Order of Service for Consecration of Bishops* Lagos: CSS Press, 1996, p.1.

¹¹⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1996,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 414.

the retirement of Bishop Ogbonyomi, the Province of Nigeria was divided into only three smaller ecclesiastical provinces, namely Province I, II and III. Province III included the dioceses in Northern Nigeria.¹¹⁷

One may presume that it must have brought joy to Bishop Ogbonyomi that before his final retirement on 14th December 1996, the single diocese of Northern Nigeria that he inherited had grown to seventeen dioceses and that the Wusasa diocese was to be created soon in 1997. Furthermore, before his retirement the proposal for the division of the Province of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) into smaller provinces emerged. The Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria had continued to grow after the bishop's retirement and more dioceses were carved out of other dioceses. Today, there are twenty-six dioceses grouped into three ecclesiastical provinces of Kaduna, Jos and Abuja. The Province of Kaduna includes the dioceses of Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Sokoto, Kebbi, Wusasa, Dutse and Gusau, with Josiah E. Fearon as its archbishop. The Province of Jos includes the dioceses of Jos, Jalingo, Yola, Maiduguri, Bauchi, Damaturu, Gombe and Oturkpo with E.K. Mani as its archbishop. The Province of Abuja includes the dioceses of Abuja, Gwagwalada, Lafia, Minna, Bida, Kafanchan, Makurdi, Lokoja, Kubua and Zonkwa, with Peter Jasper Akinnola the Primate, Metropolitan of all Nigeria, as its archbishop.¹¹⁸

3.5 Conclusion

This section of the thesis has focused on Bishop Ogbonyomi, his biography, his relationship with other denominations in Northern Nigeria and his reaction to the splitting of the diocese of Northern Nigeria into several dioceses. The bishop was at first unenthusiastic about the creation of the dioceses, arguing that this was not something that was very urgent.¹¹⁹ This was because, as he further argued, the diocese was not

¹¹⁷ The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) *Order of Service of the Inauguration of the Ecclesiastical Province of Kaduna* Kaduna: Majiyabo Int'L Printers Ltd., 26th January 2003, p. 3.

¹¹⁸ The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) *Order of Service of the Inauguration of the Ecclesiastical Province of Kaduna* Kaduna: Majiyabo Int'L Printers Ltd., 26th January 2003, p. 14.

¹¹⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1977," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 24.

financially buoyant enough to cope with the needs that would arise from the creation of new dioceses.¹²⁰ Nevertheless, the diocese was later split into smaller dioceses. This raised some issues of concern, which included the need for church workers and money for the administration of the dioceses, as the bishop had observed. In addition, the various dioceses were unable to work in unity; instead, there was always rivalry for resources. However, one might argue that the splitting of the diocese into smaller dioceses led to the great growth experienced in the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria to date. The bishop seemed to have a good relationship with other denominations in the area. He devoted his life to the service of the Christians of Northern Nigeria through the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Kaduna branch.

There is no doubt that Bishop Ogbonyomi will continue to be remembered and recognised for his work in the Anglican Church and other denominations in Northern Nigeria. Though he had his weaknesses, his leadership qualities remain an inspiration to the church. A good number of the people he ordained as priests are today either bishops or archbishops.

¹²⁰ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1977," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 25.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE ECONOMY

4.1 Introduction

Although religion is a very important component of social life, the economy plays a more crucial role in shaping the society, because it is the structure upon which the political, social and religious superstructures are based. In the fifties, Nigerians were hopeful that life would be better after independence. They marched into the sixties with a sense of euphoria. By then the country had everything it needed: a large expanse of arable land, a good climate and a large population, engaging themselves in labour and production. In the western part of Nigeria, cocoa, coffee and rubber were produced. In the eastern part, the main products were palm oil and palm kernels and in the northern part, groundnut and cotton. In addition to these cash crops produced largely for export and foreign exchange earnings, Bishop Ogbonyomi observed in 1984, there was “an array of food crops like yam, beans and cassava among others,”¹²¹ which met the domestic food requirements of the nation. Economically, Nigeria was the sixth largest oil producing nation in the world, and in 1981 it was described as a “tottering giant.”¹²²

Fourteen per cent of the content of Bishop Ogbonyomi’s charges addressed the economic situation of the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria and the country at large. The statistics of the content of the charges show that economic issue was reflected in all twenty-one charges, except that of 1995, thus making it the bishop’s first and most consistent priority during his episcopacy. Though the issue of Islam has the highest space-percentage according to the statistics, it did not appear in the charges as often as the issue of the economy. Again, though the economic issue was his first priority, the statistics show that the amount of space devoted to it in the charges is quite low in some years. This indicated when the bishop had an increased or decreased interest in the topic, and when his focus shifted to other issues. For example, twenty-fives lines were devoted

¹²¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1984,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 147.

¹²² *Sunday Sketch*, 26th July 1981, p. 6.

to the issue of the economy in 1986, while the issue of Islam had seven hundred and eight lines devoted to it. The rise and fall in the number of lines accorded to each interest might cause some uncertainty with regard to the reliability of the statistics. However, these fluctuations probably simply reflect the reality of the environment to which the bishop was responding. This chapter will look at the economic situation of Nigeria, its effects on the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria and Bishop Ogbonyomi's reaction to this situation.

4.2 The economy of Nigeria before the discovery of oil

The economy of Nigeria depended heavily on agriculture and mineral resources before the discovery of oil. However, after oil was discovered, these means of income were no longer considered important. When oil began to move up the scale as the nation's leading export, those who would have continued farming, flooded to the townships in search of job opportunities, hoping to get rich quickly. This was followed by the award, money given to workers by the government as a bonus (popularly called *Udoji* by the Nigerians) after the 1975 boom, causing inflation in the market. Nnamani noted that in 1964 over eighty-four per cent of the country's population lived above the poverty line. With the discovery of oil and the award of the *Udoji*, by 1980, the poverty level in the country had risen to twenty-eight per cent of the population,¹²³ forcing many Nigerians to flee to other countries in search of a living.

4.3 Bishop Ogbonyomi's views on the economy of Nigeria

In 1983, Bishop Ogbonyomi quoted President Shehu Shagari, who in a newspaper "blamed some graduates and qualified persons in the country who were refusing to take jobs outside their states of origin as the cause in the increase in the country's poverty rate, forcing state governments to rely on expatriates."¹²⁴ Had this been different, the amount the country used to pay foreigners could have been minimized, and the money saved

¹²³ Nnamani, Chimaraoke *Poverty in Nigeria* <http://www.dawodu.com/nnamani10.htm> 6/10/2005.

¹²⁴ Shagari, Shehu in *Daily Times* 8th February 1983. In Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1983," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 129.

could have used to create job opportunities for Nigerians. Reacting to president's claims, Bishop Ogbonyomi in his 1983 charge pointed out that "Nigerian graduates and qualified persons would not be willing to work in every part of the country because some of them were considered expatriates in their own country, just because they were not in the states of their origin."¹²⁵ He (Ogbonyomi) further said,

The attitude of the graduates and qualified persons could not be commended because it contributed to unemployment, however, in view of the fact that non-indigenous people working outside their states of origin might be thrown out of their offices when indigenous persons capable of working in such offices were found, such an attitude was understandable. If the situation did not change, people would rather continue to work in their states of origin where their uninterrupted pensionable services would be guaranteed and the education of their children secured.¹²⁶

In 1991 the bishop further observed that "it was due to the economic crisis that General Ibrahim Babangida's administration implemented the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) with the aim that it would benefit Nigerians."¹²⁷ Bishop Ogbonyomi wondered if people who were already struggling with poverty would be helped by this programme.¹²⁸ Furthermore, the result of the programme (SAP) was that Nigerians found themselves holding money that was devalued. The devaluing of the country's currency, as the bishop observed "brought about an increase in the payable fees for health care and education and a decreased spending on social programmes, which caused domestic dissatisfaction."¹²⁹ Many institutions were also closed down and a high inflation rate hit the market. Bishop Ogbonyomi regretfully noted that year that instead of finding solutions to the poverty, the

¹²⁵ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1983," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 129.

¹²⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1983," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 129.

¹²⁷ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Twelfth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1991," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 309.

¹²⁸ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Twelfth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1991," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 309.

¹²⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Twelfth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1991," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 309-310. See also Metz, Helen C., *Administration Division of Nigeria as of August 1991* F:\AllRefer_com - Nigeria - Introduction Nigerian Information Resource.htm 27th July 2005.

government compounded the problems of ordinary people by increasing the prices of commodities that were under its control.¹³⁰

Ukpong, commenting on poverty in Nigeria pointed out that “the situation had made it difficult for the ordinary people in the rural areas to enjoy life. Thus, many people in the rural area migrated into the towns. Many of these migrants who could not find job opportunities became truck pushers, load carriers and odd-job people.”¹³¹ The economic situation in the country left many parents who were unable to pay school fees with no choice but to send their children onto the streets to trade, to help eke out an existence for the family. This exposed many children to drugs, sexual exploitation and other social ills. In light of this, the challenge that was before the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria was to make the message of the gospel provide and inspire hope among its members, against the backdrop of the socio-economic reality in the country.

4.4 Bishop Ogbonyomi’s views on the economy of the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria

The economic situation in the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria was not different from that of the country. In 1976 at the beginning of his episcopacy, Bishop Ogbonyomi pointed out that the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria “could not afford its workers’ stipends and the bishop fueled his car with his personal money for long diocesan tours and drove it himself.”¹³² In 1977 the bishop further pointed out that “the poverty of the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria resulted in the low payment of its church workers,

¹³⁰ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Twelfth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1991,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 309.

¹³¹ Ukpong, Justin S., “The church in the African State: The Roman Catholic Experience in Nigeria” in *Journal of African Christian Thought* Vol. 1, No. 2, Ghana: Akrofi-Christaller Centre, December 1998, p. 21. Hardly were they able to satisfy their basic needs with what they earned, nor were they able to make any savings for emergencies like medical expenses, or helping their relatives in the rural areas financially. Some of them, “if they got a place to stay (either with a friend or relative in one of the slums) should count themselves lucky, while the unlucky ones stayed and passed nights in uncompleted or abandoned buildings, or under the cities flyovers,”

¹³² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1976,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 4.

compared to other dioceses in the country.”¹³³ When the diocese could not pay its yearly subscriptions to the Supra-Diocesan Board of Finance and the Northern Education Advisory Council (NEAC), it pulled out of those organizations. The bishop wrote in his 1977 charge that “in 1976 the Supra-Diocesan Board of Finance wrote off the diocese’s accumulated debt and promised to train (in Emmanuel College of Theology, Ibadan) two Hausa speakers annually with effect from September the same year.”¹³⁴

In 1978 the bishop alleged that the church members were stingy when it came to church offerings. He observed that that was so because the Christians seemed to be “unaware of the meaning, significance and the implications of the stewardship of their money in the church”.¹³⁵ The bishop blamed the missionaries who evangelised the area, saying “they only focused on conversion and ignored the teaching on giving, which would keep the church operating even after they may have gone.”¹³⁶ Perhaps they did not consider that their sponsors might one day stop sending funds, and it may be that their (the missionaries’) attitude led the Anglican Church in the area to “grow up” depending financially on grants and donations from overseas. The bishop threw more light on his argument by reporting in his 1978 charge the reaction of some villagers he questioned, as to why they allowed one of the missionaries’ rest houses to collapse. Their response was, “these belonged to the CMS,”¹³⁷ indicating that they were expecting money from the CMS for its repairs.

¹³³ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1977,” in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 18. The board also promised to send to the diocese annually, one ordained minister trained in the same college as a way of encouraging the diocese. A trained and ordained priest was receiving N45.00k a month and a district chairman received N240.00k. Because of the low salary, people were not willing to work as diocesan staff in the diocese. Those that were willing and started working only did so to gain more skills for better jobs with the government. Trained pastors with teaching skills left the clergy work for teaching jobs in government primary schools.

¹³⁴ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1977,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 24.

¹³⁵ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1978,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 39.

¹³⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1978,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 38.

¹³⁷ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1978,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 38.

In the same 1978 charge, Bishop Ogbonyomi said that “it might not be fair to the missionaries if all the blame were cast on them alone. They might have looked sympathetically at the poverty of those who had heard the gospel and would therefore rather spend their own money than ask them to contribute toward the running of the church at the start of their faith in Christ.”¹³⁸

The bishop further noted out in his 1978 charge that “the dependency in the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria had caused some denominations in the same area to criticise it for not being good at financial (management) so that it has remained poor financially.”¹³⁹ This criticism seems to be problematic in the sense that the economic situation of the country affected almost everybody in the country. Ukpong observed that “many families in both the rural and urban areas in Nigeria were affected by the poverty of the country. Families found it difficult to feed themselves. Wages had become meaningless in the face of rising inflation. Many workers were thrown out of jobs, while fresh job seekers had no hope.”¹⁴⁰ The observation of those denominations regarding the financial management of the Anglican Church could be countered and for the bishop to have just accepted the criticism without critical analysis of his members (and members of those denominations and their finances), may have been too simplistic.

Also in 1978, as a way of raising money, some congregations held bazaars where alcoholic beverages were sold, leading to drunkenness. This was rebuked and condemned by Bishop Ogbonyomi as un-Christian, as reported by the *Daily Times* newspaper. The paper reported the bishop as saying that it was “unethical, ungodly and wicked to get people drunk and charged with alcohol, as a result of which they made flamboyant promises or bought commodities at prices they would not have normally have paid.”¹⁴¹ In 1982, some members withheld their contribution to the church, leaving it in financial

¹³⁸ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1978,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 38.

¹³⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1978,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 36.

¹⁴⁰ Ukpong, Justin S., “The church in the African State: The Roman Catholic Experience in Nigeria” in *Journal of African Christian Thought*, December 1998, p. 20.

¹⁴¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., in *Daily Times*, 18th May 1978, back page.

difficulties. Such congregations claimed that there was no point in paying assessment to the diocese for paying church workers' stipends because

Jesus was not earning a salary and did not own or ride a bicycle or motor-cycle or go about in a car. Jesus went about on foot and if Jesus had to ride something else, it was a donkey. Church workers, who go about on or in the above mentioned mobility, were extravagant, against the example of their Master's simple life.¹⁴²

Reacting to the above claim, Bishop Ogbonyomi identified with those congregations, but argued that "Jesus and His disciples needed money for daily usage, and used whatever means of transport that were available at the time."¹⁴³ Afterward he called on all his congregations "to support the work of the ministry of the word of God."¹⁴⁴

Bishop Ogbonyomi's call for his church's members to finance the diocese seemed not to be taken seriously among some congregations in the diocese. Therefore in his 1984 charge, he referred his congregations to the constitution of the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria, Article 92, which stated that "the payment of assessment shall be the first charge on the funds of each parish or organization. Failure to pay assessment from any parish shall lead to the removal of its priest, catechist or any person in-charge of such a parish."¹⁴⁵ He further declared in his charge that "the constitutional requirement was not followed by some congregations and that in such congregations paying assessment to the diocese was not a priority."¹⁴⁶

Adiele, writing on the financial difficulties of the church in Northern Nigeria, blamed the church saying that "it should have mounted a massive campaign through which many congregations would have been enlightened on ways to invest and enrich their

¹⁴² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1982," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 110.

¹⁴³ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1982," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 110.

¹⁴⁴ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1982," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 110.

¹⁴⁵ The Anglican Diocese of Kaduna *Constitution* 1980, p. 29. In Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Third Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1984," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 153.

¹⁴⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Third Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1984," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 153.

churches.”¹⁴⁷ The researcher views such campaigns as being more helpful than taking drastic decisions such as removing a pastor or any church worker from the congregation that could not afford its assessment. In a critical analysis of the constitution of the Anglican Church in Nigeria, it could be argued that the constitution emphasised finances more than the spiritual life of the people. Threatening to remove a pastor or any church worker from his congregation that was not able to pay its assessment, substantiate the above analysis. If such congregations were assisted, with time and teaching they would understand that “the church in this world is not only able to offer spiritual help, but also practical help or solutions to its members’ problems”¹⁴⁸ as Adiele put it.

Bishop Ogbonyomi’s statements on the economic situation in the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria and the country were significant and relevant because they helped motivate the church to see the importance of self reliance and financial security. Though the bishop tried to encourage the paying of assessments, he was not entirely successful.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has examined the economic situation in Nigeria and how it affected the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria during Bishop Ogbonyomi’s episcopacy. The economy of the country started deteriorating with the discovery of oil and the offering of the *Udoji* award. This situation has affected almost every family and organisation in the Nigeria. In the church context Bishop Ogbonyomi, placed much of the blame on the church members because of bad stewardship of the church money and also on the missionaries who evangelised the area for not teaching and encouraging the people to financially support the church.

Though the bishop looked at it at this way, one may argue that the poverty of the country as a whole contributed to the financial predicament of the church. The congregations could not afford much “in a country where life was becoming unbearable for most

¹⁴⁷ Adiele, Shed N., (ed.) *The Niger Mission: Origin, Growth and Impact (1857-1995)*. Aba (Nig.): Isaeco Press and Ind., 1996, p.179.

¹⁴⁸ Adiele, Shed N., (ed.) *The Niger Mission: Origin, Growth and Impact (1857-1995)*, 1996, p.179.

citizens, where many families in both the rural and urban areas found it difficult to feed themselves”¹⁴⁹ as Ukpong observed. The church should have embarked on campaigns and projects aimed at bringing aid to its congregations, while also explaining that it relied heavily on the contributions of these congregations to function effectively. Campaigns among the people on ways to generate income for the financing of their churches should thus been undertaken. The campaigns would have facilitated the quest for skills that would enable the people to help themselves and the church. Another tool that the people needed for poverty alleviation and skills development was education. Unfortunately, education was not handled very well after the Nigerian government took over the mission schools in the country. Furthermore, agriculture, which should have been encouraged, was neglected because of the discovery of oil. The government should revive the agriculture and make available the necessary farming implements and skills.

¹⁴⁹ Ukpong, Justin S., “The Church in the African State: The Roman Catholic Experience in Nigeria” in *Journal of African Thought*, December 1998, p. 20.

CHAPTER FIVE

BISHOP OGBONYOMI AND EDUCATION

5.1 Introduction

Education is a social function, and one of primary importance in the development of every society. Christianity, colonialism and commerce were inextricably linked to the introduction of education in Nigeria. The missionaries who brought western education to the country have been regarded by many Nigerians as the front troops of colonialism and commerce, softening the hearts of the people for the purpose of their exploitation by Europeans and as a way of westernising Nigerians.¹⁵⁰ Schools established by the early missionaries were seen by the emirs in Northern Nigeria as a strategy for evangelism. The singular and narrow objective of conversion naturally limited the missions' educational policies and programmes in the country. The missionaries did not feel it was necessary to encourage education beyond the point of making converts good readers and teachers of the Bible. In fact the only way to develop humanity capitally is through broad education, be it religious, western or skills acquisition or a combination of them all.

Seven per cent of the content of Bishop Ogbonyomi's charges concentrated on the issue of education. The bishop in his charges of 1992, 1993, 1995 and 1996 focused strongly on the need for the government to return the missionary schools and other private schools it had taken over, but it did not provided a concrete remedy to the situation.¹⁵¹ An examination of the twenty-one charges delivered by the bishop indicates that he seems to have taken education very seriously, but in eight of his charges (which represent eight years) he failed to comment on education. These years included 1979-1984, 1987 and 1989. In view of how important education is for modern humanity, one would think that education would have taken a more prominent position in his charges. In this chapter, the

¹⁵⁰ Idowu, Emmanuel Bolaji. *Toward An Indigenous Church*. London: Oxford University Press, 1965, p. 1.

¹⁵¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Twelfth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1992", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 341. See also "Third Session of the Twelfth Synod, 1993, p. 354, "Second Session of the Thirteenth Synod, 1995, p. 401 and "Third Session of the Thirteenth Synod, 1996, p. 417.

charges will form the primary source in documenting the history and state of education in Nigeria, the bishop's attitude to the take-over of schools and the effects of the take-over of the mission schools on Christian education in Northern Nigeria

5.2 Colonial administrators and mission education in Nigeria

When colonial administrators came to Nigeria, they needed educated people to fill specific offices. In light of the calibre of people they required, they "interfered with the mission schools already in existence to raise the necessary human resources."¹⁵² To achieve their goal, they made modifications to the mission schools. Problems started at the beginning because, while the missions emphasised religion, reading, writing and arithmetic, the colonial administration encouraged the learning and teaching of the English language. "The choice of subject was then informed by the fact that the administrators needed interpreters, court clerks and police, commercial and financial clerks among others, hence the institution of conditional grants-in-aid by government as way of encouraging the mission."¹⁵³ Rather than accepting the conditions imposed by the government in 1882-1950¹⁵⁴ on the donation of grants-in-aid at the risk of their schools being used as a major source of recruitment, the Anglican mission decided to forgo the government subsidy.

However, the government between 1882 and 1950 undertook a bold intervention in education in the country by promulgating codes, regulations, guidelines and policies, appointing inspectors and making grants available for schools to ensure quality education. The refusal of the Anglican missions to accept the conditions imposed on them by the government marked the beginning of the loss of a number of schools under the church's command. The Anglican mission never regained its position up to the outbreak

¹⁵² Adiele, Shed N., (ed.) *The Niger Mission: Origin, Growth and Impact (1857-1995)*, 1996, p.190.

¹⁵³ Adiele, Shed N., (ed.) *The Niger Mission: Origin, Growth and Impact (1857-1995)*, 1996, p.190.

¹⁵⁴ Mkpá, M.A *Overview of educational development: Pre-Colonial to present days*
<http://www.onlinenigeria.com/education/index.asp?blurb=534> 12th April 2006

of the Nigerian civil war and after the subsequent take-over of schools in 1975 by the government.¹⁵⁵

It appeared that the reason for the government's take-over of the schools and the mission's struggle to retain their schools was that both were aware of the vital role of schools in the future of the country. This was why the nationalists were determined to wrest the schools out of the missions' control. Afigbo, analysing the reason for the take-over of the schools says,

“The nationalists recognised the important role which the schools could play in the achievement of such goals as modernisation, industrialisation, national unification and cultural renaissance. Consequently, they were also equally determined to gain control of the schools to ensure that future generations were properly brought up or thought the right ideology and right arts and sciences.”¹⁵⁶

In order to take full control of these schools, the government brought out new guidelines which limited the building of future primary schools while existing schools were henceforth to be under the control of local authorities. The guidelines further excluded voluntary agencies from getting grants, whereas local authorities enjoyed such privileges.¹⁵⁷

Furthermore, the nationalists were disturbed by the unhealthy rivalry among the missions. Adiele observed that “the divisive effect and the proliferation of schools which arose as a consequence of the rivalry hardly made for stability and development in the country.”¹⁵⁸ Thus the nationalists might have justifiably felt that the take-over of the schools was a way of disarming the combatant rival in the educational field.

¹⁵⁵ Jibril, Munzali *Country Higher Education Profiles*
http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/soe/cihe/inhea/profiles/Nigeria.htm 25th April 2006.

¹⁵⁶ Afigbo, A. E., “An Investigation of the Relationship between Christian Missions and Secular Authorities in South Eastern Nigeria from Colonial Times” in *Oduma Magazine* Vol. 1. No. 1 (October 1973), p. 20.

¹⁵⁷ Statement of Policies and procedure for the Guidance of Education for Officers, Local Government Councils and Voluntary Agencies Mineographed, August 20th 1956.

¹⁵⁸ Adiele, Shed N., (ed.) *The Niger Mission: Origin, Growth and Impact (1857-1995)*, 1996, p. 192.

5.3 Bishop Ogbonyomi and the education of Christian children in Northern Nigeria

Bishop Ogbonyomi observed that in the early days of Christianity in Nigeria, “one of the aspirations of every village church was to have a school attached to their church, an aspiration which took up much time and money.”¹⁵⁹ Due to that aspiration and the effort of the CMS and other missionary bodies, a number of schools spread in Northern Nigeria so that by 1913 the Northern Provinces had the following schools:

- (a) Church Missionary Society (CMS) : 13
- (b) Sudan United Mission (SUM) : 4
- (c) Sudan United (SU) : 1
- (d) Sudan Interior Mission (SIM) : 7
- (e) Mennonites Brethren in Christ (BMC) : 3
- (f) Roman Catholic Mission (RCM) : 1
- (g) Government schools: 12.¹⁶⁰

All these schools were taken over by the regime of General Yakubu Gowon, in 1975 (leaving the Anglican Church with only two: St. Bartholomew’s in Wusasa-Zaria and St. John’s in Jos), with the promise of compensation, a promise which was not fulfilled.

Since the take-over of the schools in Nigeria, the quality of education started deteriorating, especially in Northern Nigeria. The schools were left un-maintained and teachers began to experience poor and late payment, leading to incessant strikes in the country’s educational system. In 1976 Bishop Ogbonyomi pointed out that “inasmuch as one might appreciate the motive behind the take-over of the schools, one could also certainly blame the government for the neglect of such schools.”¹⁶¹ In 1978, the bishop noted that “the ministry of education adopted what was called “bridging the gap” in order to favour pupils getting into post primary institutions.”¹⁶² Under the system, “teachers were required to explain to the students in the Hausa language what they have said in

¹⁵⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “The First Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1976”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 5.

¹⁶⁰ Phillipson, S., *Greats in Aid of Education in Nigeria* Seasonal Paper No. 8 Lagos: Government Printer, 1948, p. 28.

¹⁶¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “The First Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1976”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 5.

¹⁶² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1978”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 41.

English.”¹⁶³ This situation challenged and concerned some governors in the area. For example the governor of Kano state was reported to have warned against the automatic promotion of unqualified pupils,¹⁶⁴ which seemed to allow them to finish their schooling without proper education. The governor of the then Gongola state, Col. M.I. Jega, was also reportedly unhappy over the schools’ results in the West African School Certificate (WASC) examinations of his state.¹⁶⁵ In the same year (1978) Bishop Ogbonyomi observed that

It is no longer a secret that after candidates have been made to go through the rigour of common entrance examinations and interview, the result sheets that would show how brilliantly they performed are set aside, while those who never sat for the entrance examinations or those who failed are taken and admitted to secondary schools.¹⁶⁶

In 1980, Bishop Ogbonyomi argued that “the governors in Northern Nigeria did not take a firm stand to ensure that the educational system in the area was improved, instead they oversaw the removal of Christian education altogether.”¹⁶⁷ In 1991, the bishop gave an example of the military governor of a state in Northern Nigeria who visited a secondary school in his state. The bishop alleged that the governor asked a JSS III student (Standard 9) what his name was, only for the student to reply *Ba turanci*¹⁶⁸ meaning, “no English.”

Ukpong, writing about the higher educational situation in Nigeria observed that “between 1992 and 1996, the universities in the country only opened for a total of about two school years.”¹⁶⁹ Looking at the condition of the schools in Northern Nigeria and the

¹⁶³ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1978”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 41.

¹⁶⁴ *Nigerian Tribune* 2nd March 1978, p. 8.

¹⁶⁵ *New Nigeria* 21st March 1978.

¹⁶⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1978”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 41.

¹⁶⁷ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “The Second Session of the Eighth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1980”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 73. Thus chapels in the schools taken over by the government were pulled down and Christian owned fields and buildings were encroached upon to the extent that Bishop Ogbonyomi had to call on the federal government to stop the government of Northern Nigeria from continually allowing the construction of football stadiums, garages, swimming pools and multi-purpose halls in vicinity of church buildings.

¹⁶⁸ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “The First Session of the Twelfth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1991”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 310.

¹⁶⁹ Ukpong, Justin S., “The Church in the African State: The Roman Catholic Experience in Nigeria” in *Journal of African Thought*, December 1998, p. 19.

country at large in the 1990s, the observations of Bishop Ogbonyomi in 1976 and of Ukpong in 1998 appear to be justified because there was no proper maintenance of the schools and no erection of new classrooms, as Ukpong pointed out saying,

Classes with their roofs destroyed by storms were left un-repaired, leaving children exposed to sun, rain and cold. There was also no sufficient equipment or other facilities in secondary schools and the universities were grossly inadequate and dilapidated. Furthermore, parents were expected to purchase chalk and dusters for teachers and the children had to carry benches or chairs with desks or tables from their homes to their schools.¹⁷⁰

Meanwhile, Bishop Ogbonyomi continued to call on the federal government to return the schools it had taken over to their original owners, claiming that that would give an opportunity for religious teaching to resume, which would also bring back good virtues to the educational system of the country.¹⁷¹ In 1994, Bishop Ogbonyomi further called on the federal government to admonish education officers who were going about ordering headmasters of schools to ban all Sunday-school instruction in their classrooms, Christian prayer in schools, and the teaching of Christian religious knowledge.¹⁷² The bishop seemed to think that by teaching religion in schools, the many corrupt practices mentioned above would have been lessened, because the children would grow up with moral guidance and with respect for God's laws. However, one might argue that the economic situation and the poverty of the people in the country would lead people into devious or criminal behaviours, regardless of their Christian education.

The bishop also noted that "the low standard of education was worsened by the irregularities in the educational system in the country, such as the purchasing of examination question papers before the examination date, paying people to sit the exams on behalf of candidates, the buying of certificates and the bribing of invigilators, with

¹⁷⁰ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Twelfth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1992", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 341.

¹⁷¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Twelfth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1992", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 341. See also "Third Session of the Twelfth Synod, 1993, p. 354, "Second Session of the Thirteenth Synod, 1995, p. 401 and "Third Session of the Thirteenth Synod, 1996, p. 417.

¹⁷² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "The First Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1994", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 378.

invigilators who refused to comply being beaten or murdered.”¹⁷³ In 1995, it was reported in the *Vanguard* paper that some invigilators who refused to succumb to a community’s request for an examination malpractice during a Joint Matriculation Examination were allegedly shot dead by members of the community.¹⁷⁴ In light of these events, Bishop Ogbonyomi foresaw a time when Nigerian certificates would not be recognised by the rest of the world.¹⁷⁵

Who to blame for the proliferation of examination malpractices in the schools? Was it the children’s lack of seriousness, which ended up in their purchasing of examination or was it the parents who provided the money? The children were indeed to blame, but it would be unfair to hold them entirely responsible. While it was true that truancy, loitering about and a lack of seriousness on the part of the children contributed to the problems, there was no moral justification not to accept that the parent who provided the money for the buying of the examination questions, as well as the supervisors, invigilators and teachers who asked for or accepted gratifications were any less guilty. Some parents hardly looked at their children’s work at home and had no time to visit the school of the child, let alone discuss the affairs with class teachers and headmasters. There were some parents who would not provide the necessary school materials, such as textbooks or pay the school levy as and when due, to avoid their children being removed from the classroom. This can be seen as having contributed to the fallen standard of education in the country.

In the same year (1995), the bishop noted with regret that ethnicity had begun to permeate the educational system of the country “when the ministry of education decided that all principals of federal colleges were hence forward to be people indigenous where the schools were located.”¹⁷⁶ The bishop continued by saying,

¹⁷³ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “The First Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1994”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 376.

¹⁷⁴ *Vanguard* 24th February 1995.

¹⁷⁵ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1995”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 402. See also Ezeaku, Ossie *Education: What it means to Nigerian of Today* <http://nigeriaworld.com/articles/2005/aug/112.html> 21/8/2005.

¹⁷⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1995”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, pp. 402-403.

The decision can be interpreted as a blow to the principle of national unity among the various ethnic groups upon which the colleges were founded. Many principals were tempted to work only for their own state or ethnic group, so that in order to fill posts, unqualified people were sometimes appointed in high positions. Staff working under such persons became demoralised and resentful, while other well qualified non-indigenous people were rendered jobless.¹⁷⁷

What effort did the bishop then make in providing a remedy for the poor education of the Christian children in Northern Nigeria? With regard to how Christians themselves could remedy their children's education, the bishop did not say much. One would have expected him to suggest an alternative for those who could not afford to send their children to the two remaining Anglican Church schools or to other private schools. It should be noted that since Bishop Ogbonyomi's retirement, the researcher is an eye witness to the fact that a large number of schools (from nursery to secondary) have been opened from parish to diocesan level through the encouragement of other bishops and clergy in the area. This had helped to increase the level and availability of education for the Christians in Northern Nigeria to some extent. In addition, one might have expected the bishop to admonish in no uncertain term the corrupt and uncommitted attitudes of many parents to their children's education.

Another question one might ponder on is whether the government take-over of the schools was completely incorrect. Though Bishop Ogbonyomi tended to view the take-over negatively, one might argue that the take-over of the schools brought about the remuneration of teachers as well as the payment of medical, leave, transport and housing allowances, which teachers did not receive previously. Furthermore, with the take-over, the denominational rivalry which divided the communities along sectarian loyalty became a thing of the past. Proximity rather than denominational loyalty now determined the school most children attended.

Nevertheless, there was no doubt that the standard of education in Nigeria plummeted and the education of Christian children in the northern part of the country was in

¹⁷⁷ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1995", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 403.

jeopardy. Thus the statements of Bishop Ogbonyomi on education remain relevant. His approach was supported by the delegates of his diocesan synod who suggested in the 1994 synod that “mission schools should be returned to their original owners and a re-introduction of Christian religious teaching should be implemented in all schools in the country.”¹⁷⁸ Though it is very difficult to view objectively a system in which one is immediately involved, Bishop Ogbonyomi put educational issues and others into perspective and in so doing revealed the real situation of the Christians in Northern Nigeria. Furthermore, the statements of the bishop on Nigeria’s education brought to light the elements in the society that were ready for change, why changes of a particular kind were needed, how to enable this to happen and what development would be achieved and with what effect.

5.4 Conclusion

An effort has been made to briefly summarise the effects of the government’s take-over of schools in Nigeria. There seems to be no doubt that the standard of education in Nigeria has fallen, since the take-over. Bishop Ogbonyomi traced this decline to the government take-over, claiming that it led to the irregularities that permeate the educational system in the country. However it can be argued that the low motivation and corrupt practices in the schools are simply a reflection of the problems faced in individual homes and in the broader society.

Although the reality of the problems in the educational system of Nigeria after the take-over of mission schools during Bishop Ogbonyomi’s episcopacy could be acknowledged, the take-over could be viewed as a positive step. It brought about the remuneration of teachers and the payment of various benefits. In addition, in theory at least, the take-over provided the framework for the national standardization of the curricula and examinations. Denominational rivalry which divided the communities along sectarian loyalty also became a thing of the past.

¹⁷⁸ “The communiqué of 1994 synod” in Ogbonyomi, Titus E, “First Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1994,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 19.

CHAPTER SIX

BISHOP OGBONYOMI AND CORRUPTION IN THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN THE DIOCESE OF NORTHERN NIGERIA AND IN NIGERIA AS A COUNTRY

6.1 Introduction

Fifteen per cent of the content of Bishop Ogbonyomi's twenty-one charges concentrated on the issue of corruption both in the church and in the country at large. "Corruption" is such a popular term that one may be tempted to assume that it needs no definition. It has become a household word in Nigeria and pervades all strata of society. Because of its widespread and adverse effects, it connotes different things to different people. It is defined by the *New World Dictionary of the American Language* "as an act or fact of becoming deteriorated from the normal or standard or becoming morally unsound or debased." Thus understood, the word corruption refers to a change in the behaviour of people from what is seen as the norm, which is decent, good and acceptable. "Corruption can then be perceived as that action and thought pattern exhibited from an impure heart that is debased and inclined to immoral behaviour, depraved character and dishonest disposition which manifests in indiscipline and a disorderly way of doing things."¹⁷⁹ The term "indiscipline" in the Nigerian context can mean anything from the act of stealing to the mismanagement of funds meant for the progress of the citizens of the society. This eventually manifests itself as a systematic process that destroys the pillars of society (the institutions that underpin the nation's administration and laws) that hold a social system together.

Corruption first appeared in Bishop Ogbonyomi charges in 1979 when the country was campaigning for a civilian government. The topic of corruption appeared in thirteen out of the twenty-one charges and whenever it appeared it was with a high concentration. The bishop seemed to be silent on the issue of corruption from his inception as the bishop of

¹⁷⁹ Ochekepe, Sarah *Effect of Corruption on Nigeria Society: Christian Responsibility in the Fight Against Corruption*. Bukuru Jos: TCNN, 2000, p. 2.

the diocese of Northern Nigeria in June 1975 until 1979, making one wonder whether there was no corruption or whether was it in the year 1979 that corruption came into the open in Nigeria. However, corruption was a major focus of interest in six of his charges, (1981 with 105 lines, 1982 with 322 lines, 1984 with 250 lines, 1990 with 234 lines, 1991 with 225 lines and 1996 with 98 lines.) In view of the increase in the rate of corruption and the manner it has affected and has been associated with Nigeria as a nation, the percentage devoted to the topic in the charges was logical. The chapter will thus use the charges to study the situation as regards corruption in Nigeria, its effects on the church in Northern Nigeria and the bishop's responses to this.

6.2 A brief history of corruption in Nigeria

“Corruption is as old as the world, and is found everywhere.”¹⁸⁰ However, in Nigeria, a sovereign nation since October 1960, corruption seems to flourish at an exceptionally high level. It has become a country where the truth has several colourations and stealing has many definitions, a country where the rogue receives chieftaincy titles and honorary doctorate degrees. In 1984 Kukah, in his analysis of the situation in Nigeria observed that the church, which should have delivered the nation from corruption, was also not immune from it and so, “instead of speaking out against corruption, the church remained quiet, which contributed to the rise in the rate of corruption in the country.”¹⁸¹ Inasmuch as the church kept silent, many wrongdoers thus felt themselves to be perfectly moral. Furthermore, criminals who gave large donations to the church received great favour and recognition from certain religious leaders.

In Northern Nigeria, corruption is an old phenomenon. As far back as February 1952, the emir of Gwandu moved in one of the Northern House of Chiefs' meetings that the house should agree that “bribery and corruption were widely prevalent in all walks of life and that it should recommend that native authorities should make every effort to trace and punish offenders with strict impartiality, as well as working to educate public opinion

¹⁸⁰ Dike, Victor E., *Managing the Challenge of Corruption in Nigeria*
http://www.nigerdeltacongress.com/marticles_the_challenges_of_corru.htm 19/7/2005.

¹⁸¹ Kukah, Matthew H., “Chaplain of Kirikiri,” *New Nigeria* 17th March 1984, p. 12.

against bribery and corruption.”¹⁸² In 1979 Bishop Ogbonyomi identified that corruption had entered the Anglican Church, with some clergy enriching themselves with church money by receiving extra payments from their parishes.¹⁸³ These facts show that logically corruption and fraud are human failures that do not have ethnic or sectarian boundaries. Though corruption is not peculiar to any continent, region or ethnic group, this does not however mean that its incidence and magnitude are the same in every society. Some societies or countries are obviously more corrupt than others. In Nigeria, despite the unending commissions formed by every administration, as well as calls made in churches to fight corruption, nothing seems to have had a positive effect.

6.3 Bishop Ogbonyomi’s views on corruption in Nigeria

When Bishop Ogbonyomi became the bishop of the diocese of Northern Nigeria in June 1975, he seemed to be silent on the issue of corruption in the country. It was in 1979, four years later, that he began to talk about it. In his charge of 1979, he alleged that “there were some government and local government officials who aided and abetted others to defraud their employers.”¹⁸⁴ In 1981 he quoted the *New Nigeria* in 1980, which reported that “the governor of a state in the northern part of the country discovered that furniture meant for the Universal Primary Education (U.P.E.) scheme in the state, had ended up in private houses.”¹⁸⁵

Writing about stewardship in his charge of 1981, the bishop pointed out that “corruption had permeated the minds of people in the country, because everybody wanted to reach the financial pinnacle at all cost and as fast as possible. This had caused crimes of different categories (highway robbery, bank raids, fraud in commercial houses and businesses) in

¹⁸² Eze, N. Eze *Effect of Corruption on Nigeria Society: The Christian Responsibility in the Fight Against*, 2000, p. 3.

¹⁸³ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Eighth Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1979”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 64.

¹⁸⁴ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Eighth Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1979”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 59.

¹⁸⁵ *New Nigeria* 7th October 1980, p. 3. In Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Eighth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1981”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 85.

the nation.”¹⁸⁶ In Minna (the capital city of Niger state) the same year, Bishop Ogbonyomi also pointed out that “some contractors who received part of their mobilization fees for building military quarters abandoned their jobs half way.”¹⁸⁷ In 1982 Bishop Ogbonyomi observed that

Corruption remains one of Nigeria’s most serious developmental problems and so it was embarrassing because after just twenty-one years of independence, Nigeria seems to have excelled in corruption as well as other vices that bring shame and disrespect to a nation.¹⁸⁸

Bishop Ogbonyomi never tolerated corruption during his episcopacy either in the church or in society. He saw corruption as a disgrace to the church and the country, stating that “it was unethical as well as irresponsible for any illegal diversion of funds meant for the citizenry of a nation to unjust causes.”¹⁸⁹ In 1984 Bishop Ogbonyomi recounted that “some Nigerians were sent abroad to negotiate for brand new buses for the use of their government and people. Instead of going for brand new buses, they selected used ones, washed them with chemicals, re-conditioned the engines, made them look like new ones and shipped them to the country at inflated costs. The buses hardly served the country for two years.”¹⁹⁰ He further said that “the corrupt practices in the country had portrayed the people of the country as corrupt people, corrupt worshippers of whatever religion and corrupt leaders at all levels and sectors, politically and religiously, which had destroyed the image of Nigeria as a nation, morally, politically and spiritually.”¹⁹¹ In 1985 the bishop lamented that “the corrupt attitudes in the country seemed to have sent God away from the country, hence the inconvenient life situation in the country.”¹⁹²

¹⁸⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Eighth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1981”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 85.

¹⁸⁷ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Eighth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1981,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 85.

¹⁸⁸ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1982,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 112.

¹⁸⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1982,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 107.

¹⁹⁰ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1984,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 142.

¹⁹¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1984,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 147.

¹⁹² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Tenth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1985,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 160

In his 1989 charge, the bishop alleged that “a government official was given a contract of buying mats for the poor. In his report, he indicated purchasing each mat at twenty naira, while every illiterate person knew a mat in the market at that time was ten naira.”¹⁹³ Furthermore, the bishop pointed out in his 1989 charge that “when the Federal Military Government was queried about the reason behind having spent as much as what they spent in the 1987 independence celebration, the explanation given showed that the 1988 independence celebration would cost less.”¹⁹⁴ In 1991 Bishop Ogbonyomi pointed out that “bribery was being received at all levels in cash and kinds to silence the recipients from exposing and pushing culprits.”¹⁹⁵

In 1994 the bishop stated that “corruption has become a way of life in the country, with anyone not prepared to comply discovering himself or herself trying the swim against the tide.”¹⁹⁶ On 16th March 1994, General Oladipo Diya, a vice president of the country said, “All Nigerians are corrupt.”¹⁹⁷ This statement received many reactions from individuals who felt offended by the sweeping statement. The bishop in his charge of the same year said that “though one might see the statement as too generalising, the reality was that most Nigerians were, are or have the tendency to be corrupt.”¹⁹⁸ In his 1996 charge, Bishop Ogbonyomi, said “even banks in Nigeria were no more to be fully trusted, because even the few that were to be trusted had covertly over manipulated peoples’ funds put in their trust, for their personal satisfaction and gain and thus rendered innocent families financially hopeless and irredeemable.”¹⁹⁹

¹⁹³ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Eleventh Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1989,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 258.

¹⁹⁴ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Eleventh Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1989,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 258. Rather the 1987 celebration cost less than that of 1988 independence.

¹⁹⁵ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Twelfth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1991,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 307.

¹⁹⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Thirteenth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1994,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 376.

¹⁹⁷ Oladipo, Diya *National Concord* 26th March 1994.

¹⁹⁸ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Thirteenth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1994,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 376.

¹⁹⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1996,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 422.

Having looked at Bishop Ogbonyomi's comments, the researcher would want to compare them with the comments of some other people in the country. Ochekepe, commenting on corruption in Nigeria in 2000, four years after the retirement of Bishop Ogbonyomi, emphasised that "corruption had entered into the fabric of Nigeria in that it was found in all categories of people and in all offices in the country. It was found among illiterates and literates, the religious and non-religious, the rich and poor, men and women, so that it looked as though a child was conceived in corruption and the aged died in corruption."²⁰⁰

Mbaku the same year, said that

By 1966, six years after independence, most Nigerians were already publicly declaring that corruption had emerged as the most important post-independence obstacle to development. Corruption had become so pervasive in the country that it was fast becoming the main preoccupation of most civil servants.²⁰¹

Mbaku further said that "Major C. Kaduna Nzeogwu, who led a coup in 1966, told Nigerians that the intention of the military elites who overthrew the government was to remove from office irresponsible and opportunistic politicians, incompetent and corrupt civil servants and to restore respectability, professionalism, transparency and accountability to Nigeria's public service."²⁰²

Much of the government's response to corruption in the country was limited to condemning the emerging scourge and promising to deal with it more effectively in the future. Thus, when the military capitulated to the government in 1966, many Nigerians hoped that the soldiers, who hailed from a more disciplined and structured background than the civilian rulers, would be able to deal more effectively with corruption and would restore professionalism to the country's civil service. Many people believed that "the soldiers would use their comparative advantage in the employment of violence to literally

²⁰⁰ Ochekepe Sarah *Effect of Corruption on Nigeria Society: Christian Responsibility in the Fight Against Corruption*, 2000, p.

²⁰¹ Mbaku, John Mukum *Bureaucratic and Political Corruption in Africa: The Public Choice Perspective* Malabar, Florida: Krieger Publishing Company, 2000, p. 21. The first republic had been aware of the insidious nature of the corruption in the country but appeared either unwilling or unable to confront it. In 1966, some concerned military officers arose in a violent coup and overthrew the incumbent government when it blamed it of "corruption, malfeasance in office, financial mismanagement, gross dereliction of duty, illegal appropriation of public resources for private uses, nepotism, and other forms of opportunism.

²⁰² Mbaku, John Mukum *Bureaucratic and Political Corruption in Africa: The Public Choice Perspective*, 2000, p. 21.

intimidate the people of the country into compliance with the nation's laws and subsequently rid the society of its scourge."²⁰³ However, to this day the stated intentions and aims of those military officers remain to be accomplished.

Because those in authority, who have the power to correct the ills, were themselves part of the rot, the public security system was weakened. The police started collecting bribes, forming illegal tolls and levies on high ways. Despite the "War Against Indiscipline" (WAI) of the Buhari's regime in the eighties, corruption did not end. Those looking for jobs had to "know somebody" or to offer bribes, even if they were well qualified for the job. As a result of the corrupt practices, "guilty people were freed, while the innocent languished in jail or were condemned to death without proper trial."²⁰⁴ By the mid 1980s, most Nigerians had become disgusted with corruption and the destructive effect it continued to have on the economy of the nation.²⁰⁵ As those who controlled the country's political space and its resource allocation grew richer, the masses continued to suffer in poverty. This rendered the anticorruption campaign launched in the country valueless because many people saw it only as a way to placate them.

The junior cadres were not left behind. Messengers and other categories of junior staff also engaged in various acts of corruption, like the hiding of files or demanding *Toshiya* (bribes) before serving a customer. Typists pilfered stationary just as their bosses misused or diverted government properties. In government hospitals, especially in the rural areas, officers in charge started converting drug service units into their own patent medicine stores at the expense of government. In the educational system, hard work was no longer rewarded by good results, instead student were expected to "see" their teachers or lecturers and they were also required to procure handouts in a high cost. Some male teachers would not only take bribes but would go ahead to demand sexual gratification from females. Failure to comply with this meant failing the course automatically.

²⁰³ Mbaku, John Mukum *Bureaucratic and Political Corruption in Africa: The Public Choice Perspective*, 2000, p. 21.

²⁰⁴ Ochekepe, Sarah *Effect of Corruption on Nigeria Society: Christian Responsibility in the Fight Against Corruption*, 2000, p. 2.

²⁰⁵ Mbaku, John Mukum *Bureaucratic and Political Corruption in Africa: The Public Choice Perspective*, 2000, p. 23.

The society as a whole also contributed to the spread of corruption in the country. Endemic to the society were free fraud (known as “419”), drug trafficking, cheating, theft, robbery and a host of other social vices.²⁰⁶ Some communities arranged special programmes to honour and accord recognition to their children who became wealthy and could offer them some help. Questions about the undeserved or sudden wealth of such people were never raised. An unemployed person, who went to the city and reappeared some years later with a fleet of cars, built a mansion and threw cash recklessly around the village, was celebrated and made a chief.

This situation caused many Nigerians to move to other countries to take whatever type of job was offered to them, rather than staying in their country. Thousands of Nigeria’s learned men and women preferred to live and work elsewhere because of corruption. Young boys and girls became house boys or house girls in London or other western countries. In addition, the corrupt activities in Nigeria had led some rich Nigerians to take their money overseas for fear of sequestration, thus investing in developed economies where their money would be safe. This has “contributed to high unemployment which had in turn set off a chain reaction of high crime rates, congested prisons, the demeaning of the country’s psyche and national ego, an un-conducive investment climate, low levels of production and ultimately pervasive poverty”²⁰⁷ as Gana observed.

6.4 Bishop Ogbonyomi’s denunciation of corruption in the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria

The word church comes from the Greek word *ekklesia* in the New Testament, meaning “to call” or “to summon,” from the verb *ekkaleo*, *ek* meaning “out” and *kaleo* “to call or to summon.”²⁰⁸ The church can then be seen as a people God called out. The word *ekklesia* is understood to have a loose connection with the Hebrews *qahal* in the Old Testament, which means “congregation” and “assembly”.

²⁰⁶ Ochekepe, Sarah *Effect of Corruption on Nigeria Society: Christian Responsibility in the Fight Against Corruption*, 2000, p. 4.

²⁰⁷ Gana, Jerry *Effect of Corruption on Nigerian Society: Christian Responsibility in the Fight against Corruption* Bukuru Jos: TCNN, 2000, p. 3.

²⁰⁸ Wilmington, H.L. *Wilmington Guide to the Bible* USA: Tyndale House. Wheaton, Illinois, 1984, p. 691.

The above understanding of the church implies the idea of solidarity, unity, partnership, fellowship and improving the lot of others. There can be no meaningful meeting or gathering where there is no partnership and no assisting of one another. This explains why the early church leaders acted promptly when they discovered corrupt dealings in the caring for widows in the church (Acts 6: 6). Furthermore, religion has to do with the spiritual realm and through it human beings relate with their creator. Such a relationship is guided by reverence, fear, submission, moral uprightness, and love for God and fellow human beings. Religious institutions like the church exist to strengthen such a relationship through the proper teaching of religious doctrine to all people. Therefore, acts that go contrary to these doctrines are not to be condoned.

In contravention of the above teachings, the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria was not immune to corruption, both among its officials and its members. Corruption is more than just embezzling funds meant for public use, it also include actions that corrupt people's minds. Among the church's corrupt practices, according to Bishop Ogbonyomi, were "the teaching of wrong doctrines, the commercialisation of spiritual gifts, manipulation, the use of supernatural powers, the pilfering of offerings, adultery, hunger for position and recognition, embezzlement, the mismanagement of resources, extortion, rivalry, and the neglect of responsibilities."²⁰⁹

In 1982, the bishop added, certain churches were understood to have embezzled church money. These types of churches "ran their church committees in an unconstitutional way and some of their committee members lied in order to justify their corrupt practices. Some priests received an unconstitutional salary apart from the one the diocese paid them, claiming that it was organised by their congregations because of the poor salary scale in the diocese."²¹⁰ Apart from collecting extra salaries, the bishop pointed out that "some priests were colluding with church members to pillage church funds in the name of

²⁰⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1982," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, pp. 110-113. See also, Ocheke, Sarah *Effect of Corruption on Nigeria Society: Christian Responsibility in the Fight Against Corruption*, 2000, p. 4.

²¹⁰ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1982," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 110. Such emoluments were never recorded in their public accounts, nor do the beneficiaries ever declare to the authority what they were receiving.

charity.”²¹¹ Certain committees awarded themselves church contracts at inflated costs. A church was alleged to have spent a huge amount of money on the ceiling of their church although the material needed for it had been provided by the congregation. In addition, certain committees regularly feasted with church money as a way of celebrating the success of a harvest.²¹² Bishop Ogbonyomi’s fight against corruption was relevant and was widely accepted, because corruption was so pervasive and it was particularly disgraceful, as the bishop observed that “those involved were mostly the adherents of the two major religions in the country (Muslims and Christians).”²¹³ He then called on the government to employ new approaches to combat corruption in the country. However, he maintained that in doing so “the country cannot overcome corruption if it continues to fight it the way it had done since independence. For unless everybody in the country killed within himself or herself pride, self interest, hatred, greed, fraud, and dishonesty, corruption will not become a thing of the past.”²¹⁴

The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in their response to the fight against corruption noted with deep sadness that corruption had become the cultural identity of Nigeria, as the world had come to regard Nigeria as one of the most corrupt nation in the world.²¹⁵ The church further regretted that

Increasingly, corruption in whatever shade, was being accepted as a way of life and as part of Nigerian ethos. This embraced everybody from the most highly placed to the lowest. Therefore, the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) as a body strongly recommended that the government should form a brigade that will be empowered to arrest and hand over to the police any member of the society, no

²¹¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1982,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 117.

²¹² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1982,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 107. Some formed organizations in the church through which they collected money from their members which was never all utilized, and the location of the remainder was never satisfactorily explained. The church thus became a place of making money.

²¹³ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1982,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 110.

²¹⁴ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1984,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 147. See also “First Session of the Tenth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1985,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 160. See also “First Session of the Thirteenth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1994,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 377.

²¹⁵ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Twelfth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1991,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 326.

matter how powerful and influential, caught offering or receiving brides.²¹⁶

6.5 Conclusion

The chapter has examined corruption in Nigeria and in the church in Northern Nigeria under Bishop Ogbonyomi's episcopacy. The bishop noted that corruption was operational in both the church and the country. He saw such an attitude as a disgrace and a shame to a nation and a church. He said, as quoted above, that corrupt acts consist of the unethical, and irresponsible, illegal diversion of funds meant for the public, an organisation or a church, to personal uses. It compromises national development, contaminates collective morality and values, distorts national planning, integrity and discipline, and destroys the foundations of creativity and governance. Despite Bishop Ogbonyomi's fight against corruption during his episcopacy, corruption continued to spread both in the church and in the country. Today, ten years later, President Olusegun Obasanjo's government is still tackling corruption, through formulating decrees that will punish anybody found guilty of any corrupt acts.

²¹⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Twelfth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1991," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 326. It should also declare a war on corruption immediately, through which strong and legal sanctions would be imposed on enrichment through public offices. Public officers found guilty of official corruption should be given such sanctions as it would deter others from following their examples.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SECRET SOCIETIES

7.1 Introduction

Another problem Bishop Ogbonyomi tried to resolve was that of secret societies. Six percent of the content of the bishop's charges dealt with the issue of secret societies. In 1976, he acknowledged the existence of secret societies and their negative impact on church and society. Perplexed by the issue, he recalled the early days of Christianity in the country saying, "history had it that some adherents were so devoted that they would not even make fire on Sundays. In spite of all persecutions, they clung to their faith and refused to have something to do with "pagan" rites."²¹⁷ Considering how the bishop tended to portray the pervasiveness of secret societies in Nigeria and their destructive effects, it may be surprising that the bishop devoted relatively little space to it in his charges and how in only eight years out of twenty-one the issue appeared. This chapter will look at his views on secret societies in Nigeria and in the church in Northern Nigeria.

7.2 Understanding secret society in Nigeria

Bishop Ogbonyomi knew of the existence and the destructive effects of secret societies. However, the charges did not clearly explain what "secret society" means in the Nigerian context. He only defines it as an "idolatrous act for Christians to belong to secret societies."²¹⁸ The researcher thus examined the definitions of other authors on the subject. Freeman defined these societies as "hidden or secret."²¹⁹ According to Edwell, "secret society refers to hidden or secret wisdom, to that which is beyond the range of ordinary human knowledge, to mysterious or concealed phenomena, to inexplicable events, and to

²¹⁷ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1976," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 6.

²¹⁸ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1976," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 7.

²¹⁹ Freeman, Hobart E., *Every Wind of Doctrine* Warsaw, Indiana: Faith Ministries & Publications, 1974, p. 159.

that which is frequently used in reference to certain practices which included divination, fortune telling, spiritism (necromancy), and magic.”²²⁰ From a Christian perspective, in Deuteronomy God condemns the above practices saying, “Whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord” (Deut. 18: 11). Luke also wrote in the Acts of the Apostles that “Those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all” (Acts 19:19). The very fact that secret societies are so difficult to define and thus deal with, highlights the need for a deeper investigation than that provided by Bishop Ogbonyomi.

7.3 Bishop Ogbonyomi’s view on secret society

Bishop Ogbonyomi, in an article on secret societies, recounted that the “concern about the activities of secret societies in Nigeria began to grow in 1914, when some leading churchmen started an organization, known as the Reformed Ogboni Fraternity (ROF).”²²¹ Among these men was a high ranking Anglican priest, the Venerable Thomas Ogubiyi, who formed the ROF in order to establish a fellowship which would have a morally binding influence on the members of the community, especially the Christians. The name of the organization at its inception was the “Christian Ogboni Fraternity”, with the Holy Bible covered with a calabash as part of its emblem. However, their activities were condemned by Bishop Tugwell (the leader of the missionary term to Northern Nigeria) and Oluwole (the second bishop of the diocese of Northern Nigeria), as “dangerous to the faith of the Christians”²²² as a result of which the name was changed into “Reformed Ogboni Fraternity” (ROF).

In 1976 Bishop Ogbonyomi, reacting to the issue of secret societies, emphasised their negative impact on the church and on society in general. He called on the church to “disassociate itself from those societies, adding that any professed Christian of whatever grade (a bishop or one only baptized yesterday) that belongs to any secret society is not a

²²⁰ Edwell, Water (ed.) *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* 1985, p. 787.

²²¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Secret Society” in Peters, Sola (ed.) *Secret Cults: The Way out*. Lagos: Pita prints Limited, 1995, p. 5.

²²² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Secret Society” in Peters, Sola (ed.) *Secret Cults: The Way out*, 1995, p. 6.

believer.”²²³ After a meeting on 10th-13 February 1976 at Ibadan, the Episcopal Synod of the Province of West Africa issued a pastoral letter warning against and condemning secret societies, which they understood to have a destructive influence that directly or indirectly conflicted with the religion of Christianity and which interfered with the total Christian allegiance and commitment to Christ as the Lord of the church. The pastoral letter then called on Christians “to be loyal to Jesus Christ, with an undivided, total and absolute heart.”²²⁴

In 1977 Bishop Ogbonyomi noted out that the danger of the ROF was that “they claimed to have Christ’s blessing, using and teaching their followers from the Bible and the Qu’ran. They were also doing good works that should be undertaken by the Christian and Muslim faithful, such as building hospitals and running charitable organizations.”²²⁵ Nevertheless, he argued that “there was doubt over whether they were ultimately loyal to Christ or to their gods, because of the rituals the secret society member has to pass through before being accepted as a member.”²²⁶ Furthermore, the bishop pointed out that at initiation, “it was always part of the secret societies’ oath that each member will aid and assist a companion when engaged in any difficulty, and espouse his or her cause whether the companion is right or wrong.”²²⁷

In the *Prime People Magazine* of 1991, it was alleged that an Anglican bishop, Bishop Lijadu, shunned the Holy Bible to embrace the “Ifa Oracle”²²⁸ Bishop Ogbonyomi refused to accept that the accusation was true, claiming that there was no bishop by the name Lijadu in the history of the Anglican Church. Neither had the name appeared as an

²²³ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1976,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 7.

²²⁴ Province of West Africa “Episcopal Letter” in Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1976,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 8.

²²⁵ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1977,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 18.

²²⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1977,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 18.

²²⁷ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Secret Society” in Peters, Sola (ed.) *Secret Cults: The Way out*, 1995, p. 14.

²²⁸ *Prime People Magazine* “Anglican Bishop Shuns Holy Bible, Embraces Ifa Oracle” Vol.5 No. 36, 1&7 February 1991.

ordained deacon, or priest.”²²⁹ Still, one may not rule out the possibility that the story could be true as the publishers might have used a pseudonym to keep the real name confidential.

In the same year (1991), Mustapha Umar El-Kanemi, the emir of Borno, was quoted in the *New Nigeria* as condemning strongly the existence of the secret societies on the country’s campuses. He alerted parents and guardians to the threat such societies had caused to the quality of the learning environment in the country.²³⁰ In 1994 Bishop Ogbonyomi also stated that “secret societies had found their way into the country’s campuses, thus causing fear among the students and staff.”²³¹ The bishop quoted a report in the *New Nigeria* of 14th March 1994, which alleged that “secret society members attacked Omoleye Sowore, the student union president of Lagos University, stripped him naked and stabbed him, leaving him injured because he was leading a battle against secret societies on the campus.”²³² Furthermore, the bishop said he attended the Kaduna diocesan Women’s Guild Conference from 2nd to 5th April 1994 and an alleged story was told of a “female student who was butchered and who had body parts removed. The girl was alleged to have been “sold” by two colleagues who were also accused of “selling” other students to members of secret societies for ritual purposes.”²³³

7.4 Secret societies and the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria

In 1977, Bishop Ogbonyomi alleged that “some members of the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria belonged to secret societies and still retained their church membership.”²³⁴ In the light of this in 1978 a public renunciation of secret society

²²⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Twelfth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1991,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 313.

²³⁰ *New Nigeria* 5th February 1991, p. 16.

²³¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1994,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 377.

²³² *New Nigeria* 14th March 1994, in Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1994,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 378.

²³³ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1994,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 378.

²³⁴ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1977,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 18.

membership was imposed on all clergy and members holding positions in the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria. The renunciation was declared by the bishop in the Cathedral Church of St' Michael, in Kaduna.²³⁵ Later the same year, the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) brought out a statement of declaration against secret society membership. The declaration was to be pronounced by members who were elected to offices including the primate, bishops, priests, deacons and ordinands. The words of the declaration read thus:

I..., of..., affirm and solemnly declare before God and the assembly of God's people here present, that I do not belong to any secret cult(s) and that I will not under any circumstances accepted membership of any secret cult(s) all the days of my life. If after this declaration I join any secret cult(s), I place myself under the wrath of God Almighty, in the name of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen.²³⁶

In the same 1978 charge, Bishop Ogbonyomi called on the clergy to be ready to carry out the renunciation of those societies in their various parishes throughout the diocese and stated that should there be any individual among the clergy who belonged to such a society, he be ready to surrender his licence as a priest or cease to be an interpreter of the love of Christ.²³⁷ In the contrary, in 1986, Gogo Somba, a synod delegate in Niger Delta diocese blamed the church for neglect of its members. He argued that "It was the disappointing failure of the church to take care of its flock at least, that created the necessity for people to resort to organizing friendly groups to which they will look for assistance in time of need."²³⁸

In 1987, during the synod of the diocese of Kaduna held at Bida, some delegates who might have been disturbed by the activities of such societies "asked Bishop Ogbonyomi whether the declaration made at the ordination and swearing in of church officials was

²³⁵ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Third Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1978," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 49.

²³⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Secret Society" in Peters, Sola (ed.) *Secret Cults: The Way out*, 1995, p. 42.

²³⁷ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Third Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1978," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 49.

²³⁸ The Second Session of the Twelfth Synod of Niger Delta Diocese *Memorandum in Defence of Reformed Ogboni Fraternity*, 1986. As long as the church remains unchallenged over the issue of sharing one another's pains, sorrows and joy, secret societies will continue to draw a lot of people

not a mockery of the church.”²³⁹ Ten years after the denunciation of secret society membership by the bishop, (in 1988) he noted that “two strong diocesan officials of the diocese of Kaduna, who according to him were understood to be members of some secret societies, withdrew from their offices voluntarily and did not attend that year’s synod.”²⁴⁰ The diocesan synod of 1994 joined the bishop in denouncing the activities of such societies in the country as Satanic and destructive to both lives and properties.²⁴¹

However, judging by the reason given by Gogo, one might argue that the people who joined the secret societies found the solace, fellowship, security and satisfaction which the church had failed to provide. It then meant that the failure of the Anglican Church in this field gave secret societies an opportunity to disregard its authority. Furthermore, those who joined such societies might have experienced the church as an organisation like any other, seeing church activities as meaningless in terms of meeting their earthly needs. In addition, many members suffering from loneliness, lack of personal identity and alienation might have not been shown much compassion by the church in Northern Nigeria, thus leading them into membership in secret societies.

7.5 Conclusion

This chapter has examined Bishop Ogbonyomi’s views on secret societies in Nigeria. Bishop Ogbonyomi believed that such societies exist in Nigeria. He believed that members of secret societies had a destructive influence on the life of the Christian in the country. He also alleged that members of these societies attacked people who were against them. However, the bishop did not clearly explain what the secret societies were. He may have presumed that everybody knew what secret societies mean in Nigeria. In the light of this, one might argue that the bishop may have been vulnerable to rumours, stories and speculations circulating in the country.

²³⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Tenth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1987,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 224.

²⁴⁰ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Eleventh Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1988,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 247.

²⁴¹ “The communiqué of 1994 synod” in Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1994,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 19.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ETHNICITY IN THE POLITICAL LIFE OF NIGERIA AND THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

8.1 Introduction

Ethnicity and religion are two variables commonly referred to in analyzing political behaviour in Nigeria. If Richard Joseph is right in stating that party politics is “a relentless struggle to procure individual and group benefits via the temporary appropriation of public offices,”²⁴² then the main goal of Nigerian politicians was to procure benefits both for themselves and their ethnic or religious group. The bishop stood against ethnic divisions in the church and in the political life of the country.²⁴³

Nine per cent of the content of Bishop Ogbonyomi’s charges dealt with the issue of ethnicity in the political life of Nigeria and in the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria. The topic is reflected in thirteen of the bishop’s charges. Using the charges as primary source, this chapter will study the political situation in terms of ethnicity in the country and how it affected the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria. It will further look at how Bishop Ogbonyomi tackled the problem of ethnicity in the church in Northern Nigeria.

8.2 The effect of unifying Nigeria under one administrative banner

Ethnic consciousness in its modern sense could be said to have arisen in Nigeria during the colonial period when the British authorities unilaterally decided to bring together the different linguistic groups under one administrative banner. Choice is the main principle implicit in democracy. Nnoli observed that it was at that time that “the myth of unbridgeable differences was propagated amongst the ethnic groups in the country, which

²⁴² Joseph, Richard A., *Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria: The Rise and Fall of the Second Republic* Ibadan: Spectrum Books, 1991, p. 153.

²⁴³ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Eighth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1981”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 88.

the population internalised.”²⁴⁴ Therefore, improving the quality of democracy so that no ethnic group dominated another has been an elusive goal over the past decades of Nigerian history. Although successive military governments shared a cynical view of democratic rule, they nonetheless invested an enormous amount of time and resources in reestablishing its framework between 1978 and 1989. Hyden observed that “they were stimulated in part through vociferous public demands to promulgate new constitutions and some institutional means for ensuring political, democratic stability and economic development. Thus modifications to the constitution were enacted to establish non-majoritarian policies so as to protect all ethnic groups.”²⁴⁵

8.3 Ethnicity in the political life of Nigeria

Ethnicity in politics is dangerous because it can become a source of strong bias in favour of one ethnic group, causing resentment and anger among other groups. This has sometimes developed into ethnocentrism, a claim to ethnic superiority and a hatred of people from other ethnic groups. Gros observed that “it was in line with this ethnic feeling that the structure of Nigeria’s first republic provided for a substantial degree of regional autonomy at the time of independence in 1960.”²⁴⁶ Since then, “the national politics have remained centered on interethnic relations, thus giving certain ethnic and religious groups hegemony in a regional unit in the country.”²⁴⁷ Thus, ethnicity remained the strongest tool in manipulating Nigerian politics and at times when religion came into play it was often only as a camouflage for ethnicity. One example pointed out by Bishop Ogbonyomi was the annulment of Abiola’s (a Yoruba from the southwest) presidential election of 12th June 1993.²⁴⁸ The annulment of the election led to the argument that if Abiola were from the north, this would not have happened.

²⁴⁴ Nnoli, Okwudiba *Ethnic Politics in Nigeria*. Enugu: Fourth Dimension Publishers, 1978, p. 136.

²⁴⁵ Hyden, Goran and Bratton, Michael (eds.) *Governance and Politics in Africa*. London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1992, p. 97.

²⁴⁶ Gros, Jean-Germain (ed.) *Democratization in Late Twentieth Century Africa: Coping with Uncertainty*. London: Greenwood Press, 1998, p. 64.

²⁴⁷ Gros, Jean-Germain (ed.) *Democratization in Late Twentieth Century Africa: Coping with Uncertainty*. London: Greenwood Press, 1998, p. 64.

²⁴⁸ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1994”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 385.

To these days, in political elections, people are voted for not necessarily because they are good candidates, but because they belong to an ethnic or sub-ethnic group. In appointments to posts at national and state level and even in the church system, there is intense lobbying by different ethnic groups to have their people grab the topmost posts. Local governments, states and dioceses were requested and created on an ethnic basis.

8.4 Ethnicity in the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria

This lobbying did not only take place in government circles, but also in the church in Northern Nigeria. Bishops and priests were appointed to serve in their places of ethnic origin. This may explain why Bishop Ogbonyomi was criticised for importing Yoruba priests from the west to Northern Nigeria. Furthermore, the bishop was seen by the indigenous Northerners as being “concerned only for his Yoruba people.”²⁴⁹

In the politics of Nigeria, it was noted that some politicians often attacked their opponents unjustly. Thus, some Christians saw politics as a dirty game unworthy for Christians to participate in.²⁵⁰ In his charges of 1989 and 1991, Bishop Ogbonyomi condemned the Christians who absented themselves from the politics of the country and called on them not only to vote for people, but to participate fully in the politics of the country, to work toward correcting the polity of the nation. He further enjoined all the Christians to remove from their mentality the thought that politics is a dirty game unworthy for Christians to involve themselves in it. He called on Christians with high ethical principles to go into politics to put biblical principles in the governance of the country before expediency and make decisions consonant with Christian ethical precepts. As Christians, people with high ethical principles should not sit back while the nation fell socially, economically and educationally into chaos.²⁵¹

²⁴⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Third Session of the Eighth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1981”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 88. See also “The Second Session of the Twelfth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1993”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 334.

²⁵⁰ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1989”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 269.

²⁵¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Twelfth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1991”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 301. He called them to go out and register their names for voting which is the first step in voting procedures He also admonished them to go out and vote the person they knew would be responsible

In addition, the bishop noted that ethnically based associations such as “the Northern Nigeria Igbo Anglican Association (for the Igbo), the Northern Action Committee (for the Hausa) and the Association of Concerned Members (for the Yoruba), had sprung up in the church of the diocese of Northern Nigeria.”²⁵² Bishop Ogbonyomi condemned the existence of such associations in the church and warned his clergy not to allow them to continue to operate in the church.²⁵³ The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) similarly condemned these associations and ordered their immediate closure. Though the bishop was negative about tribalism in the church, he was apparently not immune to it. As indicated, he was blamed for “importing” Yoruba priests to the north to hold positions in the church.

Six years after Bishop Ogbonyomi’s retirement, Oghumah pointed out that “in the politics of Nigeria, many incidents have been orchestrated by opportunistic miscreants and political thugs, which has caused many problems in the country.”²⁵⁴ To find a solution, he suggested that “the country needs politicians that would apply moderation in their approaches to solving political problems, politicians who are ready for self-sacrifice, self-denial, self-discipline, tolerance and hard work, and above all, politicians who have the fear of God at heart.”²⁵⁵ Oghumah further observed that “the root causes of some crises in Nigeria are traceable to the nation’s politicians trying to maneuver their ways into the corridors of power and authority.”²⁵⁶

Bishop Ogbonyomi’s statements on the political situation were relevant and his calls for the Christians in the country to participate in politics presented a solution. Today in

irrespective of tribe, religion and gender, whenever voting was going on, for that was part of Christian civic responsibility. Furthermore, he called on the Christians to desist from collecting money from politicians, because that would be selling their right and blocking their power to criticise when the politicians are not discharging their duties.

²⁵² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Twelfth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1991”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, pp. 320-321.

²⁵³ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Twelfth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1991”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 321.

²⁵⁴ Oghumah, Mike E., “Political Thuggery: Threat to Democracy” in *Time News* Vol. 1, No. 3, December 2002, p. 17.

²⁵⁵ Oghumah, Mike E., “Political Thuggery: Threat to Democracy” in *Time News* Vol. 1, No. 3, December 2002, p. 16.

²⁵⁶ Oghumah, Mike E., “Political Thuggery: Threat to Democracy” in *Time News* Vol. 1, No. 3, December 2002, p. 17.

Nigeria there are many Christians who are taking part in politics and working for the betterment of the country.

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter has looked at Bishop Ogbonyomi's views on the politics of Nigeria and how it has affected the church in Northern Nigeria. It seems that during the bishop's episcopacy, ethnicity was dividing the people in the country. Some Christians at the time of his episcopacy refused to participate in the politics of the country because of the way politicians attacked one another. The bishop stood against ethnicity in the political life of the people of Nigeria, as he felt that it brought about division and the violation of human rights. He saw unity a means to restore good governance. In the church he condemned the attitude of Christians who saw politics as "beneath them" and who refused to play a role in the country's political life.

CHAPTER NINE

ISLAM, VIOLENCE AND THE CONDITION OF THE CHRISTIANS IN NORTHERN NIGERIA AND NIGERIA AS A NATION

9.1 Introduction

Most people in Northern Nigeria belong to either the religion of Islam or Christianity while some are involved in African Traditional Religion, and others are either pagans or animists. However, the culture of Northern Nigeria as a whole is closely linked to Islam, with many Arabic words found in the Hausa language that is widely spoken in the area. Thus Northern Nigeria has been easily assimilated into and influenced by the Arab world. The issue of the relationship between Muslims and Christians in Northern Nigeria carried the highest percentage of coverage in Bishop Ogbonyomi's charges. He devoted nineteen per cent of the content of his twenty-one charges to discussing this topic.

Reading through the twenty-one charges revealed that the issue of religious violence appeared in seventeen of Bishop Ogbonyomi's charges. In eight of the seventeen charges, religious violence covered a large number of lines. These eight charges, their years and the number of lines devoted to the topic in the charges are presented in the table below:

Dates	Lines
1977	168
1985	216
1986	708
1987	214
1990	187
1992	224
1993	199
1994	125

The question may be raised as to why a marked increase occurred in 1986 in the space devoted to the topic. This was the year when Christians and Muslims in the Kafanchan and Zaria areas experienced the widespread burning of places of worship and the loss of lives and properties. This chapter will document the occurrences of religious conflicts, their effects on the peaceful co-existence of the people and how Bishop Ogbonyomi dealt with this issue, which also affected the church in the area.

9.2 The *Sharia* law as the source of conflicts in Northern Nigeria

In the 19th century, the people of Nigeria co-existed without many problems. However in 1902 the Sultan of Sokoto wrote to Sir Fredrick Lugard, saying “between us and you there are no dealings between *Mussulmans* (Muslims) and Unbelievers, except war.”²⁵⁷ From then onward the *sharia* law was implemented in the northern part of the country, from *hudud* penalties for theft, to the regulation of banks, marriages, inheritance, public holidays and the hours of work, even though Christians in the area opposed it.²⁵⁸

At independence, the premier of Northern Nigeria, Alhaji Ahmadu Bello, embarked on a massive programme of conversion, which led to fears of religious discrimination among the non-Muslims. The Islamic leaders sought to promote their religion through emphasising a commitment to pilgrimage and building mosques. The governmental sources for the conversion funds added to the concerns of the non-Muslims, who as a result started to equate the north with Islam and Islam with power, while being a non-Muslim was equated with powerlessness. Later, Northern Nigeria became a cause for national concern because of religious rioting.

The rioting was fuelled by the Muslims’ quest for the re-introduction of the *sharia* law in the country, along with a federal court of appeal, (after the early operational *sharia* law in the north was weakened by the country’s constitution). Their quest was grounded in the

²⁵⁷ Nduka, Otonti *Western Education and the Nigeria Cultural Background* Ibadan: Oxford University Press, 1964, p. 91.

²⁵⁸ “Christian-Muslim Relation in Africa” in *The Anitepam Journal: The Journal of African Network of Institutions of Theological Education Preparing Anglicans for ministry*, No. 28 Tanzania, Dares Salaam, November 2000, p. 16.

Muslims' understanding that the *sharia* is the divine law, according to the Qur'an (Qur'an 5: 47, 28 and 50), and is a way of life for every Muslim. This book reveals the wisdom and the insight of the creator into humanity in such a way that the *sharia* law accurately and uniquely reflects true human nature. For Muslims, it is thus not a question of general principles, which may be organised and arranged into many different but equally valid systems of law.²⁵⁹ Meanwhile, in her analysis of the *sharia* law in Nigeria, Theresa Adamu pointed out that its implementation was seen as highly problematic by non-Muslims:

Because the *sharia* forbids equality between Muslims and non-Muslims, it does not recognize the coexistence of non-Muslim communities, except perhaps as second-class or subordinate citizens; the *sharia* only recognizes Muslims as full legal persons; and that the Muslims under the *sharia* enjoy full citizenship and rights, while non-Muslims enjoy varying degrees of rights depending on the type of relationship they have established with the Muslims.²⁶⁰

Likewise the youth of the Southern Kaduna People's Union in later years observed that the use of Islamic laws had remained the major tool of oppression and extortion.²⁶¹ Therefore, the non-Muslims saw the *sharia* law as an instrument of domination and felt that Muslims were establishing strategies to turn Nigeria into a completely Islamic state, because once laws were passed at federal level they would become a national policy governing every citizen.²⁶² This may be what led the Christians both individually and collectively to oppose the Muslims' demand for the implementation of the *sharia* law in the country from 1978 onward.

As the *sharia* is integral to Islam, Muslims should have been given the right to practice it. Muslims believe that the objective of the *sharia* is to show the right path to humanity and to provide humanity with the ways and means to fulfill their needs in the most successful and beneficial way.²⁶³ However, the immediate effects of the implementation of the laws in some states in Northern Nigeria in late 1999 included the harassment of Christians, the

²⁵⁹ Mawdudi, Abul A'la *Toward Understanding Islam* London: The Islam Foundation, 1980, pp. 34-35.

²⁶⁰ Adamu, Theresa *Sharia Law and Nigeria Unity* <http://www.warc.ch/24gc/rw024/03html> 24/07/2005.

²⁶¹ *Nigeria Standard*, 11th July 2000, p. 19.

²⁶² *Nigeria Standard*, 11th July 2000, p. 19.

²⁶³ Mawdudi, Abul A'la *Toward Understanding Islam*, 1980, p. 101.

looting of properties, the destruction of businesses and residences, the denial of Christian education, a forced change in modes of dressing and transportation and the denial of airtime for radio and television broadcasts in the area.

Under such conditions, an investigation into the relationship (social and political) between the different religions in the area is needed. There seems to be two dimensions to this. The first is related to the practical living together of the individuals and communities of different faiths, while the second is related to the theological challenges facing each religion. These include the questions of the self-identity and self-expression of each faith, as well as an understanding of the significance of the relationship between the faiths. This relationship has had a complex history. At times it was marked by rivalry and war and at other times it was characterised by constructive co-existence. In addition, the relationship was complex in the sense that the two faiths viewed each others in different ways.

The Christians viewed Islam as a political, economic and theological threat and have painted it negatively as intolerant, violent and menacing, in contrast to their own positive self-image. The Muslims likewise, have been inclined to regard Christianity and Christendom (often identified with each other and with the West) as engaged in an ongoing crusade against the Muslim world.²⁶⁴

9.3 Bishop Ogbonyomi's views on religious tolerance in Northern Nigeria

An examination of the contents of the bishop's charges indicates that the religious crisis seemed to have become more severe in the middle of the eighties. In the light of this, Bishop Ogbonyomi in 1985 redefined what religious tolerance meant to Northern Nigeria:

Religious tolerance is seen to mean that while the Muslims continue to spread like wild-fire, other religious bodies are prevented from spreading. In other parts of the country where Christianity is the dominant religion, Muslims have their freedom to build mosques and practice their religious obligations, while it is not so in the northern part of the country?²⁶⁵

²⁶⁴ Office of Inter-Religious Relations *Issues in Christians-Muslims Relation: Ecumenical Considerations* Geneva: WCC Publications, 2000, p. 4.

²⁶⁵ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Tenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1985", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 161.

He further noted that “in 1985 a foundation stone of a mosque was laid in St. Louis’ Secondary School, Kano, a school built by the Roman Catholic Mission, and at Ibadan University a piece of land was shared by both faiths.”²⁶⁶ However, (in Northern Nigeria) “an Anglican Church building that had existed for almost thirty years on a piece of land covered by a Certificate of Occupancy was recommended for removal to another site because of its nearness to a mosque that was to be built nearby.”²⁶⁷

The Grand Khadi of the Niger state (Justice Khaiki Ahmed Remi), as reported by the *Daily Times* of 12th April 1988, recommended that “all religious groups should be given what they are entitled to.”²⁶⁸ Despite these calls for religious respect and tolerance, the authorities of Bayero University in Kano continued to refuse to provide a site for the building of a Christian place of worship for the students and staff who formed part of the campus community. The same year (1988) Bishop Ogbonyomi lamented the fact that the chapel in the Girl’s Secondary School of Kawo Kaduna (formerly St. Faith’s College), built by the Anglican Mission, was yet to be erected at its new site because of government policy.²⁶⁹ Therefore, there were clearly tremendous odds to overcome in the struggle for religious tolerance in Northern Nigeria.

In 1993, the secretary to the federal government (Alhaji Aliyu Mohammed’ Waziri Jama’a) asked Nigerians “to love and respect the religion and rights of one another in order for the country to know peace and meaningful development.”²⁷⁰ In the following year, Bishop Ogbonyomi observed that “religious discrimination has entered so deeply into the fabric of Northern Nigeria that some important offices were reserved exclusively for certain religious groups, thereby sacrificing efficiency for religious loyalty.”²⁷¹

²⁶⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Tenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1985”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 161.

²⁶⁷ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Tenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1985”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 161.

²⁶⁸ *Daily Times* 12th April 1988, p. 2.

²⁶⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1988”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 248.

²⁷⁰ *New Nigeria* 1st March 1993, Back page.

²⁷¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1994”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 376.

9.4 Religious disturbances in Northern Nigeria

It is the purpose of religions to provide spiritual well being and to take care of their members' interests, especially when other institutions are incapable of doing so. In Northern Nigeria, Kimball's observation that "when religion becomes evil it turns into a primary source of crisis and instability, an instrument of interpreting political loyalty, an engine of genocide and terrorism,"²⁷² seems apt. This has led some people to argue that religion should be a private affair and should not play an overtly public role in secular society. Kimball further argued that

It was rivalry between the two faiths that led to the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970. However, while the religious clash between the two faiths was central in the opening salvos of that conflict, "it was somewhat diffused when General Yakubu Gowon, a Northerner but a Christian, rose to power to lead the federal forces of Nigeria against the Igbos. This event had the effect of changing a religious war into a strictly ethnic conflict."²⁷³

The end of the civil war on 12th January 1970, when Olusagun Obasenjo accepted the Biafran's surrender, did not bring an end to inter-religious tension in the country, but it can be said to have subsided through most of the 1970s. Bishop Ogbonyomi pointed out that, after the civil war, the report of the national constitution drafting committee stated that "the state shall not adopt any religion as a state religion, but the freedom of every individual to preach, teach and practice the religion of his or her choice will be respected and protected."²⁷⁴ Reacting to this, the bishop lamented that after having "said the above beautiful words, they afterward set aside for themselves the self-imposed regulations and allowed special courts of religious bodies to operate."²⁷⁵ In 1978 "northern Muslims who were in the Constituent Assembly wanted the *sharia* to be enforced with full power in the

²⁷² Kimball, Charles *When Religion Becomes Evil* San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2002, p. 1.

²⁷³ Kimball, Charles *When Religion Becomes Evil* San Francisco: Harper Collins, 2002, p. 2.

²⁷⁴ Report of the Constitution Drafting Committee *Fundamental Objectives, Article 1, paragraph (f)*, Volume II, 1970, p. 53. In Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1977", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 20.

²⁷⁵ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1977", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 20.

country, but delegates voted against it.”²⁷⁶ At this time the country was plunged into rioting and chaos, and it took many days to restore order. However, hereafter, general religious tolerance was maintained in the whole of the country for some years.

Around 1980, religious disturbances resurfaced when a cult attracted a large number of people to a charismatic figure named Maitatsine, who claimed to be a new prophet superseding even Prophet Mohammed. This cult condemned all those who did not belong to their order as “accursed”, but mainstream Muslims and Christians considered the group as outcast. In December the same year, Maitatsine cult’s followers rioted in Kano and about a thousand people lost their lives, including Maitatsine himself. At least three times since 1980 Maitatsine’s followers rose up in riots in Kano that spread to Kaduna, Borno and Maiduguri and which resulted in the deaths of hundreds of people.²⁷⁷ Bishop Ogbonyomi discussing the Maitatsine riot in 1983, observing that:

At a point the rioting took on a different dimension in Kaduna, when the rioters embarked on burning down all known secret societies houses. The rioters did not target Christians at that time and were even alleged to have apologized for an attempt to burn down St. Christopher’s Anglican Church in Kaduna, after they discovered that it was a Christian worship place.²⁷⁸

The bishop also pointed out in his 1983 charge that

While churches were burnt down in Sabon Gari Kano, vigilant law enforcement has foiled the rioters’ bid to destroy the Christ Anglican Hausa Church in Fagge-Kano. The emir of Kano, Alhaji Ado Bayaro and the Governor of the state visited the church at Fagge to show their disapproval for that act.”²⁷⁹

The Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, Jama-atu Nasril Islam (JNI), “also condemned all the rioting that took place at Maiduguri, Kano and Kaduna as un-Islamic.”²⁸⁰ In Kaduna, the assistant secretary-general to JNI, Alhaji M.B. Muhammad, had earlier said that “the council of Islamic religion condemned any destruction of

²⁷⁶ Pluralism and Interfaith Dialogue <http://www3.sympatico.ca/ian.ritchie/ATSC.Chapter7.htm> 9/8/2005.

²⁷⁷ Pluralism and Interfaith Dialogue <http://www3.sympatico.ca/ian.ritchie/ATSC.Chapter7.htm> 9/8/2005.

²⁷⁸ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Ninth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1983”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 128.

²⁷⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Ninth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1983”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 128.

²⁸⁰ *Condemnation of Religious Violence by Muslims in Nigeria Herald*, 19th November 1982.

churches in rioting and called on all Muslims to be law abiding.”²⁸¹ However, even though mainstream Islam and Christians equally opposed the Maitatsine group, “its existence nevertheless exacerbated tensions between the two faiths. This was because each uprising in the area brought with it a government crackdown, in which open-air preaching was banned, and stricter controls imposed on freedom of religion,”²⁸² a freedom that Nigerians had expected as their right since independence in 1960.

In that context, the use of inflammatory words such as *Arne* or *Kaffir* (Hausa for pagan) was prohibited in public speeches. But the Maitatsine followers and many Islamic groups habitually used the term to describe all those who were not members of their own group, as did Christian “fundamentalist” groups. It should be noted however that both the Christians and the Muslims constantly rebuked this attitude. Despite all this turmoil, religion continued to be important to Nigerians and there was a saying in Nigeria up until approximately 1983 that it is good for a person to have a religion, no one cares whether the person worships Jesus, or Allah or even a bottle of beer for that matter. By the middle of the 1980s, religious tensions were running so high however, that one hardly heard the proverb any more. This era could be seen as a time when religion and ethnicity replaced ideology as the prime animating and destructive force in Nigeria’s society, guiding attitudes to political liberty, obligation and nationhood and of course leading to conflicts and wars.

In March 1987, people in the Kaduna state had a setback when scores of their properties and Christians’ churches and vicarages were destroyed during a riot between Muslims and Christians.²⁸³ Bishop Ogbonyomi asserted that year in his one-day synod charge that “the incident was sparked when the Fellowship of Christian Students (FCS) of the College of Education in Kafanchan held a revival meeting (in March 1987). Their guest speaker was alleged to have quoted the Qur’an and misinterpreted it. That angered a

²⁸¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Ninth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1983”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 128.

²⁸² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Ninth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1983”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 128.

²⁸³ Kwashi, Benjamin A., “Religious Disturbances” in *Zumunci (Fellowship) Magazine ISSN 0794-179X*. Vol. 1, No. 4, Kaduna: Sooji Press Limited, December 1987, p. 10.

woman called Aisha who accused her male counter-parts of being reluctant to fight to the defend of their faith.”²⁸⁴ Thus the response to her call seemed to have triggered the rioting with its attendant consequences. Benjamin A. Kwashi giving a report on the damages caused, “estimated the properties (destroyed) to be worth eight million naira. Furthermore, he said, One hundred and fifty churches in Northern Nigeria were burned during the riot as it spread rapidly from its inception in Kaduna. Twenty-two Christians also alleged to have been killed.”²⁸⁵ While Kwashi’s (now bishop of the Jos diocese) and Bishop Ogbonyomi’s reports implied that the Christians in Northern Nigeria did not retaliate, other accounts had it that the “Christians responded by burning three mosques as well.”²⁸⁶

By the end of that crisis, “the Anglican Church in the state alone suffered a loss worth five million naira out of the eight million total damages estimated.”²⁸⁷ Amongst the Anglican casualties were:

St. Peter’s Abakpa in Kaduna, St. Francis of Assisi Theological College in Wusasa, St. Bartholomew’s Church and vicarage, also in Wusasa, St. Andrew’s church and vicarage at the Government Residence Authority in Zaria. Others included St. Michael’s church and vicarage in Sabongari Zaria, the All Saints church and vicarage in Samaru-Zaria, St. Georges’ Sabongari in Zaria and St. James’ church and vicarage in Funtua.²⁸⁸

As Christians were lamenting their experiences, the *Sunday Tribune* of 20th March 1987 carried Mashud K.O. Abiola’s (a business man and a Yoruba Muslim) remarks that “Jesus did not own a church and there is no record that Jesus built anything like a church and what was recorded in the Bible about Jesus was Jesus driving people out of the

²⁸⁴ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., Special One-day Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1987”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 203.

²⁸⁵ Kwashi, Benjamin A., “Religious Disturbances” in *Zumunci (Fellowship) Magazine ISSN 0794-179X*. Vol. 1, No. 4, Kaduna: Sooji Press Limited, December 1987, p. 10. One hundred and fifty churches in Northern Nigeria were burned during the riot as it spread rapidly from its inception in Kaduna. Twenty-two Christians also alleged to have been killed.

²⁸⁶ Pluralism and Interfaith Dialogue <http://www3.sympatico.ca/ian.ritchie/ATSC.Chapter7.htm> 9/8/2005.

²⁸⁷ Kwashi, Benjamin A., “Religious Disturbances” in *Zumunci (Fellowship) Magazine ISSN 0794-179X*. Vol. 1, No. 4, Kaduna: Sooji Press Limited, December 1987, p. 10. See also Ogbonyomi, Titus E., Special One-day Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1987”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 209.

²⁸⁸ Kwashi Benjamin A., “Religious Disturbances” in *Zumunci (Fellowship) Magazine ISSN 0794-179X*., December 1987, p. 10.

church in Jerusalem.”²⁸⁹ Bishop Ogbonyomi reacted to Abiola’s comments saying “he (Abiola) was crafty in his thinking in that he was not able to mention the reason behind Jesus’s action, for Jesus did not drive the people out because they were worshipping but because they made the place of worship a market.”²⁹⁰ On 13th March 1987, Peter Y. Jatau, archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church, Kaduna archdiocese, presented a paper in which he asserted that “there are some people in the country that are too holy to be touched and that are feared by both the state and the federal government,”²⁹¹ which was why violence persisted in Nigeria. However, Bishop Ogbonyomi reported the head of states to have during his broadcast on the crisis, denied that there were some people in the country who were too holy to be touched as the archbishop claimed.²⁹²

In his 1992 charge, the bishop noted that in 1991 the country’s inspector general of police was reported in the *Daily Times* newspaper as having assured Nigerians, particularly those living in states other than their own, that “they should have nothing to fear, as police could adequately contain any future religious disturbances in any part of the country.”²⁹³ Unfortunately, this assurance was not lived up to. In March and continuing into part of April the same year, the city of Katsina lived in anticipation of an imminent large-scale outbreak of religious violence. The full context of this crisis was not fully covered by Bishop Ogbonyomi. However, Young who wrote about it eleven years later said “at the centre of the violence was Yakubu Yahaya, a leader and preacher of a Shiite group in Katsina.”²⁹⁴ Young continued by explaining that

The violence was sparked by a December 1990 article in the *Fun Times* paper. The author of the article asked whether or not respondents would marry prostitutes who repented and became born again Christians. In addition, another article investigated the origins of prostitution and argued that many women had abandoned the profession and were leading decent lives. The author of that article

²⁸⁹ Abiola, M.K.O., *Sunday Tribune*, 29th March 1987.

²⁹⁰ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., Special One-day Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1987”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 203.

²⁹¹ Jatau, Peter Y., *How to Prevent Further Occurrences of Religious Crisis* 13th March 1987.

²⁹² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., Special One-day Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1987”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 204.

²⁹³ “Assured Safety” *Daily Times* 3rd May 1991. In Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “The Second Session of the Twelfth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1992”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 333.

²⁹⁴ Young, Tom (ed.) *Reading in African Politics* London: The International African Institute, 2003, p. 68.

supported certain claims with references to both the Bible and the Qur'an. The author claimed that Mary Magdalene used to be a prostitute before she became a committed follower of Christ and that the Prophet Mohammad had made love to a "loose" woman whom he latter married.²⁹⁵

Yahaya and his followers, in their angry response to these articles, insisted that:

An Islamic government was the only one possible for Nigeria. They accused the state governor, who was a Christian, of conniving with the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) to spread Christianity in the state and also of allowing the media to abuse the Prophet Mohammad and the Muslims. He (Yahaya) continued that Awolowo, a Christian in the western part of Nigeria, had slandered the Prophet Mohammad sometime ago by claiming that he (Awolowo) was more prosperous than him.²⁹⁶

In Bauchi, another riot took place, for which again the bishop did not provide the background. The Bauchi violence was later traced to "a Muslim who had bought beef from a Christian butcher. Other Muslims who were standing by rebuked him for purchasing meat from a cow slaughtered by an 'infidel' and suggested he returned the beef and demand a refund."²⁹⁷ It seemed that the butcher's refusal to cooperate ignited the violence, and the Muslims descended on him. Young noted that "Christians nearby came to the man's rescue but were overpowered."²⁹⁸ When the news reached the main town of Tafawa Balewa, the violence became severe with Christians and Muslims fighting with any weapons they could lay their hands on, causing the loss of lives and properties. This may seem difficult to explain, in view of the previously peaceful co-existence of the Christians and the Muslims in the area. However, Young argued that "the Christians were responding to the Hausa-Fulani who had always made it difficult for the Seyawa people of Tafawa Balewa to practice their faith as Christians."²⁹⁹

²⁹⁵ Young, Tom (ed.) *Reading in African Politics* London: The International African Institute, 2003, p. 68.

²⁹⁶ Ojudu, O., *I am not Afraid of Death* (Interview with Yahaya) *African Concord* 22nd April 1991, p. 36.

²⁹⁷ Young, Tom (ed.) *Reading in African Politics*, 2003, p. 71.

²⁹⁸ Young, Tom (ed.) *Reading in African Politics*, 2003, p. 71.

²⁹⁹ Young, Tom (ed.) *Reading in African Politics*, 2003, p. 71.

Bishop Ogbonyomi also described how, in 1992, “a more devastating riot erupted in Kano, solely against Christians, with more lives and belongings destroyed.”³⁰⁰ The riot broke out because the CAN organised a crusade and invited a German preacher, the evangelist Reinhard Bonnke, to speak.³⁰¹ That caused a lot of tension in Kano. Analyzing the cause of the riot in Kano, Young said that “perhaps the Muslims rioted not because of the evangelist but because of the claims by some Christians in Kano that Christ was coming to Kano to save souls.”³⁰² The people of Kano might have interpreted this as being condemnatory and as a way of referring to them as “pagans” (people who were still living without religion). In spite of all appeals by the emir, governor and other concerned persons in the area, the Muslims descended on the Christians.³⁰³ Young further said that “one might argue that the Kano riot seemed to be a clear demonstration of a unified goal among the Muslims, in their move to show the Christians in no uncertain terms that the ancient city of Kano was Islamic.”³⁰⁴

In March 1992, another religious riot took place in Jalingo, which was traced by Bishop Ogbonyomi to a misunderstanding between Muslim and Christian students concerning the use of water.³⁰⁵ In another incident, a delegation sent from a church in Kaduna South to Bishop Ogbonyomi reported that during their revival, two Muslim men went and insulted their guest speaker and also taken away the microphone for quoting from the Qur’an.³⁰⁶

On 14th May 1992 a riot took place in the Kaduna state, which began as an ethnic crisis, and then became a religious one that claimed hundreds of lives from both faiths.³⁰⁷ That

³⁰⁰ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Twelfth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1992”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 334.

³⁰¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Twelfth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1992”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 334.

³⁰² Young, Tom (ed.) *Reading in African Politics*, 2003, p. 71.

³⁰³ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Twelfth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1992”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 334.

³⁰⁴ Young, Tom (ed.) *Reading in African Politics*, 2003, p. 71.

³⁰⁵ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Twelfth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1992”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 333

³⁰⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Twelfth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1992”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 333

³⁰⁷ *Facts on File* 28th May 1992, p. 402. par. D.

crisis was seen as the most serious incident since the Maitatsine riots in the 1980s. The conflict started in Zango Kataf in the southern part of Kaduna and spread immediately to Kaduna town, Zaria and to the hinterland of Ikara and its environs. Bishop Ogbonyomi observed that “the day the rioting broke out in Zango Kataf, two hundred and eighty kilometers away from Zaria, the Kaduna state CAN secretary, a Baptist pastor Bulus Katung, was assassinated in Zaria by the Muslims rioters.”³⁰⁸

On Sunday 17th May 1992, as reported in the *African Concord* of 1st June 1992, some “Christians were attacked while worshipping in Kaduna metropolis. Tachio Duniyio a priest of the ECWA church and many other worshippers were killed, and both the vicarage and the church were set ablaze.”³⁰⁹ Furthermore, according to the *New Nigeria* of 17th May 1992, “Wesley, a priest, and five others of the HEKAN church were also killed during the Sunday worship. Other churches were abandoned, but Muslim rioters had set roadblocks to entrap fleeing worshippers. Many abandoned their cars and ran into private homes to beg for sanctuary.”³¹⁰ As the killing was going on in Kaduna metropolis, many Muslims were also killed at Zango. After the crisis had come to an end, General Zamani Lekwot and sixty-two other Kataf people were arrested and jailed. Lekwot was later sentenced to death, but the Babangida’s regime commuted the sentence to a short-term prison sentence. “He and the other sixty-two Kataf people have since been released and were granted state pardons in December 1995.”³¹¹ Bishop Ogbonyomi in his paper on the trail of Lekwot noted that it was at three o’clock in the morning, during the curfew imposed by the state government that the African, Bethel and Rhema churches were burnt down by the Muslims rioters.³¹² Furthermore, “Christians who were caught by the Muslims rioters were asked to recite a verse from the Qur’an, failure meaning instant death.”³¹³

³⁰⁸ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., *The Trial and Conviction of Gen. Zamani Lekwok and others*, a paper presented to the Provincial Standing Committee of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), 26th to 28th March 1993.

³⁰⁹ “Massacre in Kaduna” *African Concord* 1st June 1992, p. 25.

³¹⁰ *New Nigerian* 17th May 1992, p. 1.

³¹¹ *The Guardian* 14th December 1995, p. 1.

³¹² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., *The Trial and Conviction of Gen. Zamani Lekwok and others*, 26th to 28th March 1993.

³¹³ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., *The Trial and Conviction of Gen. Zamani Lekwok and others*, 26th to 28th March 1993. A survivor later informed Bishop Ogbonyomi from her hospital bed that she was caught and asked to

The many religious crises that caused the destruction of properties and lives in Northern Nigeria made the non-Muslims in that part of the country feel that they were being squeezed out by their Muslim counterparts. As Bishop Ogbonyomi noted, “the Christian cried out that they are not wanted in Northern Nigeria.”³¹⁴ The Anglican bishop of the Kano diocese also observed with dismay that “not only did the Muslims physically threaten the Christians, but they also barred their children from the best educational institutions and opposed Christian ministries.”³¹⁵

The religious disturbances, resulting in death and destruction, seemed endless. In September 1995 at Potiskum, in Yobe state, another crisis broke out when Christians were attacked and killed during Sunday services. Bishop Ogbonyomi noted that “one of the victims was a priest killed while celebrating the service of Eucharist with his congregation.”³¹⁶

In his 1995 charge, the bishop pointed out that there seemed to be a change in the way the conflicts were played out in Northern Nigeria. He described how on 26th December 1994 Gideon Akaluka was killed in Kano. “The incident began when a piece of paper with Arabic inscriptions was alleged by some Muslims water-sellers to have been used to clean a baby’s faeces. The water-sellers shouted that the Holy Qur’an had been desecrated.”³¹⁷ Later, Akaluka, who may well have had no idea of who the guilty person was, was held responsible, arrested, beaten, taken to court and thrown into prison. During

recite a Qur’anic verse and that on her failure to do so, her attackers cut her throat half way, slashed her stomach from the chest through to the abdomen and told her to run for her life. She collapsed just a few yards from them, but was picked up and rushed to the hospital.

³¹⁴ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1995”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 400.

³¹⁵ Ayam, Bertram Baima in Aymer, Elise *Nigeria: Clash of Religions* <http://www.yale.edu/iform/winter1996/nigeriaWin96.htm> 27/07/2005. Reflecting on the acquisition of land for building churches, he wondered how it was that Muslims easily found lands for their mosques even when the rules of towns planning were bent, yet Christians could not get permission to build new churches. The bishop further observed that that was a major reason for the deterioration of the relationship between the communities. It is also a reason why small disagreements could result in killing, looting, destruction and the burning of churches and mosques, something that was not common some years ago.

³¹⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1995”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 400.

³¹⁷ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1995”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 400.

his detention, some Muslims broke into the prison, killed him, removed his head and stuck it on a stick and paraded it around the city of Kano.³¹⁸

In the same charge he told the story of riot that took place in 1994 in Sokoto. He said that

A Christian who lent a Muslim some money went to claim his loan back. The Muslim was alleged to engage the Christian in a discussion, which ended with the Muslim shouting that the Christian had insulted the Holy Prophet. The spontaneous reaction from other Muslims who were nearby was to descend on the Christian with cudgels and whatever could be found until he collapsed and was given up as dead. When they discovered that he was not dead and had been handed over to the police, they threatened to burn down the police station, until the police released the man to them and they killed him.³¹⁹

All too frequently, discussions between Muslims and Christians ended in insults and violence. However, in his responses to all these entire crises, Bishop Ogbonyomi seemed to keep the voice of the Muslims silent. While Christians in Northern Nigeria accused their Muslim counterparts of starting discussions that often ended with violence, the Muslims also accused the Christians of insulting the prophet Mohammad during such discussions. Many Muslims also looked with dismay at the spread of literacy across the globe and at the rapid advancement in communication technology in the country, which had westernised Nigeria. In addition, there was the influence of newly developed religio-political beliefs and ideologies, hitherto unknown to the people, which were also sources of religious resentment and ultimately violence.

Yahaya Ibraheem Yero, in a paper presented at the fourth International Conference on Christian-Muslim Mutual Relations at Jos, maintained that

After every religious crisis in Northern Nigeria, Christians are always on the offensive. Christians are never tired of slandering the Prophet of Islam as an impostor, or his wives as being unchaste. Christians are relentlessly trying to influence government to withdraw the subsidy given to Muslim pilgrims to Mecca on yearly basis, and having failed,

³¹⁸ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1995", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 400.

³¹⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1995", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 401.

they un-biblically invented pilgrimage to Jerusalem. They also embarked on blocking roads on Sundays even though not a single soul offers worship to Christ on them. The fact is that their Muslims counterparts are not blocking roads on Fridays just for the fun of it. On the contrary, they are compelled by necessity to do so because the mosques could not contain them. Besides, some churches have now formed the habit of playing audio cassettes between 4.00 am and 6.00 am, so as to prevent the Muslims from hearing their call to prayer from the minarets.³²⁰

In such a situation, the bishop suggested that the government should take immediate steps to stop both parties from attacking one another in order for Christians and Muslims to live harmoniously in Northern Nigeria. The first step was to bring to book the perpetrators of those acts and publicly condemning the attacks carried out for religious and ethnic reasons.³²¹ This may help to restore unity and peace in Northern Nigeria and the country in general. Otherwise, as Bishop Ogbonyomi further pointed out, “each group in Northern Nigeria that may felt marginalised may decide to defend themselves in the light of the evidence that the government of Northern Nigeria, through its law enforcement agents, is either not interested in their safety or no longer able to protect them and that will be disastrous to the area.”³²²

9.5 Bishop Ogbonyomi’s views on religion disturbances in Nigeria as a nation

It was not only rioting and conflict that caused religious tension and strife. In 1986, General Babangida’s regime sought to redefine the secularity of the Nigerian states by enlisting the nation as a member of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC).³²³ That act almost brought the nation to a standstill. The Muslim-Christian rivalry was inflamed and heightened. Many writings circulated the country in which learned

³²⁰ Yero, Yahaya Ibraheem *Nigeria as a Multi-Religious State: Meaning and Implication* Jos: Study Centre, Muryar Bishara, 23rd-28th August 1999, pp. 6&10. The Christians have also sponsored *Muzika* programmes in electronic media in which Qur’anic and not Biblical texts are disrespectfully musicalised. This attitude is indeed against the spirit of peaceful religious co-existence. But the kind of docility that is exhibited by the Muslims over these issues is not sending the wrong signals. It is supposed to show the world how tolerant and peace loving the Muslims are.

³²¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., One-day Synod 1987, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 205.

³²² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., One-day Synod 1987, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 205.

³²³ Nifal-National Ecumenical Centre *The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Nigerian State: What Christians Say* Jos: PHM Media, 1986, p. 65.

Christian scholars and organisations warned of the danger awaiting the Christians, most especially those in Northern Nigeria, if the membership of the country in the OIC was not withdrawn. Muslims too were prepared to do anything to retain the country's membership in the organisation.

In 1986 Bishop Ogbonyomi and the Province of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) presented papers on the dangers of the country's membership of the said organisation. Bishop Ogbonyomi in a paper entitled, *The Beginning of our End*,³²⁴ took the president to task for having allowed his peaceful and admirable rule to be eroded by enrolling the nation as a member of the OIC. The bishop narrated Christians' experiences in Northern Nigeria since independence, including the lack of freedom of worship and ownership of land, and the effect of the take-over of missionary schools on them. He also lamented on what the position of the Christians in Northern Nigeria would be if the country remained a member of the OIC.³²⁵

The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in its meeting held at St. Matthew's Cathedral in Benin City the same year rejected with all its power the membership of the country in the OIC. The meeting observed that Nigeria's continued membership of the OIC would mean that its resources would be used for the promotion of one religion at the expense of another. The meeting further observed that the words of Alhaji A.F. Masha and R.A. Oyekan, respectively the president and the secretary of the Muslim Council, reported in the Nigerian *National Concord* of 13th February 1986, were threatening. The words read thus:

The Muslims of this country, who by the grace of Allah, are in the majority, have resolved not to take any longer, any injustice from any quarters. From now on, the Muslims of this country will demand and take effective steps to obtain their right. Although they will continue to be peace-loving, they will rebuff any threat, or blackmail with the toughness that is historically characteristic of Islam.³²⁶

³²⁴ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Tenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1986", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, pp. 193-195.

³²⁵ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "The Second Session of the Tenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1986", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, pp. 193-195.

³²⁶ Masha A. F, and R.A., *Oyekan Organization of Islamic Conference National Concord* 13th February 1986, p. 3.

The barrage of criticism by Christians against the membership of the OIC led to the setting up of a twenty-member panel, comprising leaders of both religions, to examine the implication of Nigeria's full membership in the organization. The panel, headed by Col. John Shagaya, however, did not admit that Nigeria was a fully-fledged member of the body.³²⁷ But twelve years later (in April 1998), the opposition to Nigeria's membership of the OIC was to recur when the sultan of Sokoto, Mohammed Maccido, who was also chairman of the Jamat'atu Nasiral Islam (JNI), confirmed Nigeria's full membership of the Islamic body. Commenting on that sensitive matter, Justice Williams said that "the pronouncement by Sultan Maccido of Sokoto, lacked credence and legality as it did not come from the head of state. He added that people should refrain from any attempt to overburden Nigeria, as any attempt to join the OIC would be the end of the existence of Nigeria as an entity."³²⁸

In the midst of this argument of whether or not Nigeria was a full member of the OIC, an Islamic organization known as the Islam Welfare Foundation (IWF), formed in 1984, criticized what it called the "noise and tears" attending Nigeria's membership of the OIC, saying it was an unnecessary diversion. A communiqué issued at the end of its third national congress held in Lagos in 1986 and signed by its national coordinator, Alhaji O.A. Kasim, conveyed the following message:

The organization expressed concern over the gradual pauperization, political exclusion, intra and inter-religious discrimination that are destroying corporate Nigeria. The organization appealed to Nigerians not to allow their attention to be diverted from the problems facing the nation. They urged Christians to learn some tolerance and understanding from their Muslim counterparts, who watched, without any recriminations or orchestrated protests, the colossal amount of public funds squandered on the pastoral visit of Pope John Paul II to the country. As if that was not enough, the federal government was

³²⁷ Nifal-National Ecumenical Centre *The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Nigerian State: What Christians Say*, p. 11.

³²⁸ Nifal-National Ecumenical Centre *The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Nigerian State: What Christians Say*, p. 11.

reported to have donated prime facilities, constructed at Abuja from public funds, to Christendom for use as revival grounds.³²⁹

In addition, the Muslim students of Bayaro University in Kano warned the government that any attempt to withdraw Nigeria from the OIC would meet with stiff opposition.³³⁰

Reacting to the alleged membership of the nation in the OIC, the bishop said “this would lead to religious war, which would spell doom for the nation as it had done for other nations. It would also destroy the unity of Nigeria.”³³¹ Furthermore, responding to the statement of Muslim students in Bayaro University, the bishop pointed out that

Any attempt to plunge the country into membership of OIC that was never negotiated by the country’s ruling body, would be stiffly resisted. Christians in Northern Nigeria had been too positive as a result of which they have been at the receiving end of all religious crises. Christians in the north would no longer be willing to continue to fold our arms while our churches and properties are destroyed and we end up finding ourselves in a situation of religious slavery and extermination.³³²

Nigeria was enlisted as a member of the D8 organization (Organization of Eight Developing Countries), which was also understood to be an Islamic organization. The Christians Association of Nigeria, Kaduna branch, responded to the new development saying

It is clear that some people are bent on driving Nigeria into a religious war. The Christians in Nigeria will remain people that shall continue to pursue peace. In pursuing their peace, they are not willing to achieve it at all cost. However, it should be known that the Christian in Nigeria will not submit their faith to anybody at any cost. It should be known also that Christians in Nigeria have been studying the development and systematic plan of Islamizing the nation from General Buhari through General Babangida to the then head of States General Sani Abacha. By all the acts of provocation that were labeled on the Christians of this nation, the then Head of States should know it that any act of disuniting Nigeria is a violation of the constitution of

³²⁹ Nifal-National Ecumenical Centre *The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Nigerian State: What Christians Say*, p. 30.

³³⁰ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Tenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1986”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 195.

³³¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Tenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1986”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 195.

³³² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Tenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1986”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, pp. 195.

the Federal Republic of Nigeria that guarantees equality to all religions.³³³

The simmering tension was dangerous and it was clear at some point that the youth in the area might act without waiting for a directive from their leaders. The bishop told the story of a young man who said to him, "Bishop, you know that Jesus was not stupid." Bishop Ogbonyomi's response was: "Yes", but "Jesus was also not violent."³³⁴

Furthermore, while there were prayers going on in Nigeria against the substitution of Saturday for Sunday, Bishop Ogbonyomi observed in 1990 that in Northern Nigeria such substitution was already rampant. "Some governors and government officials began their tour or fixed official engagements on Sundays and during hours when Christians were expected to be in their places of worship."³³⁵ By so doing, whether intentionally or unintentionally, Christian senior civil servants were thus prevented from attending their normal Sunday services. This disrupted many Christian programmes, when some of the Christian leaders in the government service were not able to fulfill the schedules they had accepted to carry out months before the sudden change of order from above.³³⁶

The bishop noted that while Christians were still contemplating the government's interference with people's worship, the Muslims were criticising the government for giving Saturdays and Sundays as work-free days in the country. The Muslims claimed that

The government was observing all Christians' festival days as holidays. Good Friday, Christmas, school holidays and university holidays are all according to the calendar of the Christian faith. Other examples of favouritism they gave included the use of Christian cross as an emblem of Nigerian schools, hospitals and ministries of justice,

³³³ Nifal-National Ecumenical Centre *The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Nigerian State: What Christians Say*, p. 13.

³³⁴ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., One-day Synod 1987, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 205.

³³⁵ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Third Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1990", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 288.

³³⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Third Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1990", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 287.

and the use of the Pope Gregory XIII calendar while rejecting the Hijrah calendar.³³⁷

The Muslims also agitated for Fridays to be made work-free days and warned that if the government wanted people to live together in peace,

It must initiate constructive changes in states' policies with a view to ensuring neutrality and impartiality. Otherwise, loyalty would be difficult to come from the Muslim Ummah in the country. Besides, de-Christianising the posture of public affairs in the country would be one of the most effective and surest means of preventing religious rivalry, suspicions and unrest.³³⁸

In 1990 the bishop responded to the Muslims' agitation for Fridays as work-free days and traced the history of Saturday as a work-free day to the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) which fought for and obtained it for Nigerian workers, in their demand for five working days a week.³³⁹ Furthermore, on 17th February 1990, in a CAN rally in Kaduna, Sabiya, a priest, highlighted the anti-Christian bias in the north when he quoted extensively from the words of Tukur (a Muslim), concerning Christians living in Muslim areas.

He (Tukur) maintained that non-Muslims living in Muslim areas could live within the confines of the state, and as non-Muslims, with their lives, properties and honour fully protected and their services made use of. The non-Muslims should however not be allowed to influence the basic policy of the state. They should not occupy key positions from where the ideological policy of the state could be influenced, but they should be allowed to act in the service of the state.³⁴⁰

In addition, Bishop Ogbonyomi noted that in a conference in the early 1990s, Muslims who were members of the OIC met and unanimously decided that:

Muslims should ensure the appointment of other Muslims into strategic national and international positions of member nations;

³³⁷ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Third Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1990", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 288. See also Yero, Yahaya Ibraheem *Nigeria as a Multi-Religious State: Meaning and Implication* Jos: Study Centre, Muryar Bishara, 23rd-28th August 1999, pp. 8-9.

³³⁸ Yero, Yahaya Ibraheem *Nigeria as a Multi-Religious State: Meaning and Implication*, 23rd-28th August 1999, p. 9. Nigerian Muslims have every reason to oppose running the country along Christian beliefs and practices, inasmuch as the Christians in the country also stood against the country's membership of OIC, for fear that Nigeria would be Islamized.

³³⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Third Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1990", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 288.

³⁴⁰ Revd. Sabiya *Kaduna State CAN Rally*, 17th February 1990.

Muslims should see to the eradication of all forms of all non-Muslim religions in member nations (such religions shall include Christianity, Ahmaddiyya and other tribal modes of worship unacceptable to Muslims); and Muslims should ensure that only other Muslims are elected to all political positions of member nations.³⁴¹

The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Kaduna branch, petitioned General Sani Abacha over Nigeria's alleged membership of the OIC. The petition, which was signed by Archbishop Benjamin Achigili and sixteen other representatives of different denominations, was routed to the president through the state administrator, Col. Hameed Ali. The petition stated:

Christians in Kaduna state stand by the national CAN and reaffirm their commitment at whatever cost to defend the secularity of Nigeria. Be it known that Christians are not opposed to Muslims in Nigeria being in OIC, but since it is an organisation of countries and not individuals, Nigeria as a nation cannot be a member. Nigeria is constitutionally secular and must remain so, or are Christians being asked to form their own country and their own government in Nigeria? The option is for the president to choose Nigeria as one of loving Christians and Muslims or a dual Nigeria founded on the divide of faith.³⁴²

The end of the OIC conflict came in 1986, when a Muslim group, the Ahmaddiyya Muslim Organization in Nigeria (AMON) advised General Sani Abacha to withdraw Nigeria from the OIC, after the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), Warri diocese had urged the government to properly explain the country's relationship with the OIC, warning that further silence on the issue could threaten national peace.³⁴³ AMON advised the government to withdraw the country from the OIC and to then explain to Nigerians what being a member to the OIC entails and to leave the decision of membership to a national referendum. They further advised that continued silence could jeopardize the security of the nation and the peaceful co-existence of its people.³⁴⁴

³⁴¹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Third Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1990", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 290.

³⁴² Nifal-National Ecumenical Centre *The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Nigerian State: What Christians Say*, p. 8.

³⁴³ Nifal-National Ecumenical Centre *The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Nigerian State: What Christians Say*, p. 8.

³⁴⁴ Nifal-National Ecumenical Centre *The Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Nigerian State: What Christians Say*, p. 8.

It thus seemed that the agitation on the *sharia*, the OIC and the take-over of mission-owned educational institutions by the government, as well as the demise of Christian education, especially in Northern Nigeria had left many questions unanswered. The political posturing and manipulation have played a role in this. The main concern of the government should then be the unity of the country and the peaceful co-existence of its citizens. Christianity and Islam are universal religions and had come to the northern part of Nigeria to stay. Therefore, preachers and commentators on religious matters should not be antagonistic toward one another's religions, but should respect one another's faith, for the welfare of all. The bishop's statements which were geared toward looking for an equal and peaceful co-existence in Northern Nigeria mirrored some sensible thought in the minds of many Nigerians.

9.6 Conclusion

The chapter examined at the religious crises in Northern Nigeria, their effects and Bishop Ogbonyomi's reaction toward it. Religious violence caused a lot of damage to the lives and properties of the people in Northern Nigeria, with the Christians suffering a great deal. The *sharia* law, initiated in Nigeria in 1902, seems to have been the source of discrimination amongst the two faiths which often ended in rioting. Bishop Ogbonyomi seemed to see the Muslims in Northern Nigeria as a threat to peaceful co-existence in the area and called for stricter punishment of violent behaviour. Though the bishop seems to have perceived the Muslims as a threat to peaceful inter-religious co-existence in Northern Nigeria, one might argue that both faiths had a role to play. The Christians in that part of the country cried out for equality, but there were no doubt cases where they may have inflicted pain on their Muslims counterparts.

CHAPTER TEN

WOMEN ORDINATION AND POLYGAMY

10.1 Introduction

Two per cent of the content of Bishop Ogbonyomi's charges dealt with women's ordination and polygamy. This topic seemed to be of the least interest to the bishop because it appeared only in three of his charges (1989 with 74 lines, 1994 with 84 lines and 1995 with 33 lines) and, whenever it appeared, it did so with less concentration than other topics. The bishop did not see any urgency in the ordination of women in Nigeria because it was not a priority at that time. The position of the bishop on women ordination was not very clear, though he referred to the non-inclusion of a woman among Jesus' apostles as a reason to approve the omission of women from ordination in the church. However, he was very negative about polygamy in the church. Women's ordination and polygamy will be treated together in this thesis because the bishop always presented them together in his charges. This chapter will use the charges to look at the attitude of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) toward the women ordination and polygamy in the church.

10.2 The outcome of the Lambeth Conference of 1988

The matters of women ordination and polygamy only seemed to become an issue to the Anglican Church in Nigeria after the Lambeth Conference of 1988. At the return of Bishop Ogbonyomi from the Lambeth Conference a woman journalist met him as well as Bishop Ayam of the Kano diocese, at the Aminu Kano International Airport. She wanted to know what the resolutions of the Lambeth Conference on women's ordination and polygamy were.³⁴⁵ Bishop Ogbonyomi responded that the Anglican Church in Nigeria was not against the idea of women's ordination, but that the issue was not its priority.

³⁴⁵ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1989", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 264.

10.3 Bishop Ogbonyomi and women's ordination

In further response to the questions of the woman journalist, he said that the resolutions of the Lambeth Conference on the issue of women's ordination were:

Each province should respect the decision and attitude of other provinces whether in support or against the ordination and consecration of women to the episcopate, maintaining the highest possible communion with provinces which differ, without necessarily indicating acceptance of the principles involved. Furthermore, the Lambeth conference of 1988 demanded that:

- (1) Bishops should exercise courtesy and maintain communications with bishops who may differ and with any woman bishop, ensuring an open dialogue in the church to whatever extent communion was impaired.
- (2) The Archbishop of Canterbury in consultation with the Archbishops should appoint a commission which will:
 - (a) Provide an examination of the relationships between provinces of the Anglican Communion and ensure that the process of reception includes continuing consultation with other churches as well.
 - (b) Monitor and encourage the process of consultation within the communion and offer further pastoral guidelines.
- (3) In any province where reconciliation to the issue is necessary, the diocesan bishop should seek continuing dialogue and make pastoral provision for those clergy and congregation whose opinions differ from those of the bishop, in order to maintain the unity of the diocese.
- (4) The conference recognizes the serious hurt, which would result from the questioning by some of the validity of the episcopal acts of a woman bishop, and likewise the hurt experienced by those whose conscience would be offended by the ordination of a woman to the episcopate. The church needs to exercise sensitivity, patience and pastoral care towards all concerned.³⁴⁶

After the Lambeth Conference of 1988, the issue came up in one of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) meetings, which met at its third general synod held at the All Saints' Church in Yaba, Lagos, on 5th – 8th February 1989. At that meeting, the following resolutions on the issue were adopted:

³⁴⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1989", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, pp. 264-265.

- (1) There should be a thorough understanding of the Bible through proper teaching at various levels to avoid conflicting interpretations that may impair the church.
- (2) There is a need to prepare people from grass-root level upward to understand the traditional, physical and spiritual interpretation and involvement of a woman in the ordained ministry.
- (3) The idea of women and ordination should be allowed to be discussed sincerely and frankly at all levels in each diocese of the province, from district church councils, to archdeaconry and diocesan levels. The resolutions from all the dioceses should be made available to the standing committee of the province in order to be able to arrive at a more acceptable, meaningful and practicable approach to the matter.
- (4) The issue should be given less publicity through the media to reduce the sensationalism attached to it.
- (5) Time is needed to clear cultural prejudices through teaching and proper training before women's ordination is further considered for possible adoption.³⁴⁷

Furthermore, a series of meetings on the issue of women ordination continued in the Church of Nigeria. On 11th April 1992, the provincial committee met again at Warri to reconsider the issue. At that meeting, it was resolved that for the time being the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) was not ready for the ordination of women because it was not the church's priority at the time. On 17th September 1992 the committee met again at the All Saints' Church in Yaba, Lagos, and decided that the issue be further studied.³⁴⁸

That notwithstanding, on 12th December 1993, Bishop Herbert Haruna of Kwara Diocese went ahead and ordained three women, Beatrice Aciwunaye Elukpo, Hannah Bello and Abigail Akinwande, as deacons in his diocese, at the St. Barnabas Cathedral Church, in Ilorin, Kwara state.³⁴⁹ That resulted in the call for an urgent meeting of the provincial committee on 5th January 1994 at the St. Michael and All Angels Cathedral, in Aba, Abia state. During that meeting, the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) considered the

³⁴⁷ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1994", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, pp. 388-389.

³⁴⁸ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1994", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 388.

³⁴⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1994", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 389.

act of Bishop Haruna to have amounted to an ecclesiastical offence under the church's constitution. The meeting argued that the bishop had been well aware of the existing resolutions on the women ordination. Furthermore, that prior to the ordination, the archbishop of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) had written to Bishop Haruna two letters in November and December, warning him of the problem the ordination might cause, as the matter was still under discussion. He was also charged of breaching his oath of canonical obedience to the archbishop, which he made at his consecration on 27th October 1974 at St. James' Cathedral, in Ibadan, Oyo state.³⁵⁰

The meeting further resolved that the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) would dissociate itself entirely from the said ordinations, which were declared null and void. The individual clergy and laity throughout the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), particularly in the Kwara diocese, were also directed not to accept the ordained women's ministrations. It was further resolved that the bishop be disciplined under chapter sixteen of the constitution of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). However, at the meeting, women were reassured that their ministrations and participation in various areas of the church life throughout the province was recognised, accepted and valued. In addition, the provincial committee met on 17th – 20th March 1994, but at that meeting, it resolved to hold unto its former resolutions on the issue of women's ordination.

One may ask what the position of Bishop Ogbonyomi on women ordination in the church was. The bishop seems not to have considered women's ordination as something requiring urgent discussion, because it was not a priority in the church at that time. That notwithstanding, he said: "I wonder if the non-inclusion of a woman among Jesus' apostles is not enough proof that women are not to be ordained priests."³⁵¹ On the other hand he was careful to point out that the Church of Nigeria had not denounced it outright.

³⁵⁰ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "First Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1994", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 389.

³⁵¹ Kwashi Benjamin A., *Zumunci (Fellowship) Magazine* ISSN 0794-179X. Vol. 1, No. 4, Kaduna: Sooji Press Limited, December 1987, p. 30.

It seems that many churches have not understood the great potential of women in church ministry. Though Jesus did not choose a woman to be an apostle, Jesus' earthly ministry displayed a remarkable openness toward women. To this day the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) has remained persistently reluctant to ordain women as priests. However, the practice of the church should be an example to society and should confer inclusive participation. The response of the bishop, some church leaders and theologians toward women today cannot in any way be seen as reflecting the attitude of Jesus.

In addition, the concept of baptismal priesthood means that the life of every baptized believer should be one of ministry. Baptism gives birth to a community of priests who are both men and women. Since the various ministries of priests are all instances of the one ministry of Christ, which in turn is the responsibility of the whole church and since men and women are equal members of the church by virtue of baptism, one would wonder what could possibly disqualify women from being ordained as church ministers.

10.4 Bishop Ogbonyomi and polygamy in the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria

Humanity seems to have practiced polygamy for centuries. It is a common phenomenon in many African countries. It has so impressed itself upon social organisation that it has influenced the nomenclature of relationships. Polygamous practice is found in Northern Nigeria among Christians and non-Christians.

There are numerous arguments for and against polygamy. Njoroge and Dube argued that "polygamy has been the basis of the exploitation of women's and children's labour, since it was justified as a means of enhancing the productivity of property for men and also because it depicted women as weak and incapable to cope with biological circumstances such as barrenness."³⁵² Bishop Colenso as far as back as 1861 argued that:

Polygamy is forbidden, indirectly by the Letters of the New Testament, and directly by the spirit of Christianity, and not being in accordance with the mind of the Creator and the great marriage law,

³⁵² Njoroge, Nyambura J. and Dube, Musa W, *Talitha Cum: Theology of African Woman* Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2001, p. 173.

which God laid down for humanity in paradise. Therefore, Christians cannot be allowed to practice it in any form, either first to enter into it, or to increase the number of their wives.³⁵³

A group from St. Michael's Anglican Church in Kaduna held a symposium in 1986 titled *Christianity and polygamy*, the proceedings of which were published in the *Zumunci* (Fellowship) magazine of the Kaduna diocese in December 1986. The group argued that "polygamy is not wrong and that monogamy is an imported culture in Nigeria."³⁵⁴ The argument attracted both written and unwritten reactions from Christians, both individuals and groups. In 1987, Mmaduakolam, wondered about the apparent approval of polygamy by the group, saying, "one would wonder if the people at the said symposium had looked properly at polygamy with its attendant consequences such as slavery in the name of wifehood and the reduction of women to mere tools of child bearing and sexual satisfaction for men."³⁵⁵

The researcher was an eyewitness to the damaging effect of polygamy in the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria. Influential men who became polygamists after conversion have deprived clergy of their priestly duties, such as preaching and conducting services. The clergy who stopped those polygamists from taking Holy Communion and from performing other lay ministry functions in the church faced their wrath. Many polygamists have criticized such actions, arguing that when they made offerings or when they donated money for a church to be built, their money was not excluded. In addition, they argued that the Bible accepts polygamists, as God worked with polygamists in the Old Testament and no doubt Jesus associated with polygamists.

The issue of receiving converted polygamists into the Anglican Church became a problem in Northern Nigeria and not only in Northern Nigeria. It was a worldwide issue

³⁵³ Colenso, J.W., *A Letter on Cases of Polygamy* 1st March 1861.

³⁵⁴ *Zumunci* (Fellowship) Magazine *Christianity and Polygamy* ISSN 0794-179X. Vol. 1. No. 3. Kaduna: Sooji Press Limited, December 1986, p. 24.

³⁵⁵ *Zumunci* (Fellowship) Magazine *Christianity and Polygamy* ISSN 0794-179X. Vol. 1. No. 4. December 1987, p. 7. Hatred, jealousy and discrimination in homes and the unequal distribution of the man's self, substance and love; favouritism, unhealthy rivalry among the women for the man's love and care, animosity, disobedience, disrespect, a population explosion and other forms of immorality.

in the Anglican Church. Bishop Ogbonyomi pointed out that the Lambeth Conference of 1988 had discussed it and had arrived at the following resolutions:

The conference upheld monogamy as God's plan and as the ideal relationship of love between husband and wife. However, the conference recommended that a polygamist who responds to the gospel and wishes to join the Anglican Church may be baptized and confirmed with his believing wives and children on the following conditions:

- (a) He shall promise not to marry again as long as any of the wives at the time of his conversion is alive.
- (b) The receiving of such a polygamist should have the consent of the local Anglican community.
- (c) Such a polygamist shall not be compelled to put away any of his wives.
- (d) Provinces who are faced with the problem of polygamists should share information on their pastoral approach to Christians who became polygamists so that the most appropriate way of disciplining and pastoring them can be found.³⁵⁶

It seems that the conference tried to avoid causing confusion and division in a family, which would certainly be the result if the polygamist was forced to do away with all but one of his wives. The children of the women driven out would certainly not be happy to be raised by the retained wife and her children. The question that one might pose is whether the resolutions of the Lambeth conference of 1988 offered a solution to the problem in Northern Nigeria. It seemed not because, in his charge of 1995, the bishop had again to reflect on the resolutions of the Lambeth Conference as regarded the position of the diocese on polygamy. Further, speaking on the issue, he said, "It is disheartening that some unscrupulous people now twist or amend the resolutions of the Lambeth Conference of 1988 to suit their own inordinate affections, saying that the resolutions of the conference approved of polygamists receiving the Body and Blood of Christ at Holy Communion."³⁵⁷

³⁵⁶ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Eleventh Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1989", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, pp. 265-266.

³⁵⁷ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Second Session of the Thirteenth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1995", in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 407.

10.5 Conclusion

This chapter has looked at women ordination and polygamy in the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria and Bishop Ogbonyomi's reaction to them. It appears from the research that the topics of women's ordination and polygamy were becoming serious issues in the Anglican Church in Nigeria in the 1990s, although they were less emphasised by Bishop Ogbonyomi than other matters. The bishop did not consider women ordination as something that needed urgent attention and moreover he was skeptical about its validity. For him, the non-inclusion of a woman among Jesus' apostles was evidence that women are not to be ordained into the church. On the other hand, he felt strongly about polygamy in the church, to which he was firmly opposed. He only accepted to the Eucharist unbelieving polygamists who became believers.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

INTERPRETATION OF BISHOP OGBONYOMI'S CHARGES, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO HOW TO DEAL WITH THE ISSUES FACING CHRISTIANS IN NORTHERN NIGERIA IN THE FUTURE.

11:1 Interpretation of Bishop Ogbonyomi's charges and conclusions

Bishop Ogbonyomi's charges have been described as beautiful, thought provoking, topical, appropriate, educative, well researched, and important references for researchers. The contents of the charges were not only spiritually diverse; they also touched on secular issues that are highly controversial and relevant. The charges discussed topical issues that affected the lives of the citizens of Nigeria, the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in particular and the entire Church in general. The charges appear to be theological, wide-ranging in their focus and in some instances critical of the existing powers. The charges portray the bishop as a person who believed in the attainability of a stable society, no matter how chaotic the current situation seemed. The charges also emphasised the need for Christianity to exercise restraint and self-control, but they also recognise that some confrontations are unavoidable, particularly in the face of the government's failure to deal with fundamental social issues.³⁵⁸ At the same time the charges seem to be a source of encouragement to Christians in Northern Nigeria

However, the charges give the impression of exclusivity with regard to other churches in Northern Nigeria. The bishop's focus when narrating the experiences and the destruction caused by religious crises is denominational. Although the Anglican Church suffered much, it was also true that all denominations in the area were similarly affected. In light of this, and because the bishop was the chairperson of the Christians Association of Nigeria (CAN) in the state, the representation of his charges should have been more inclusive through acknowledging the experience of all denominations in Northern Nigeria. One may argue that the bishop was addressing the Anglican Church in Northern

³⁵⁸ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., One-day Synod 1987, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 205.

Nigeria and that he used the term “church” in a broader sense, but this was still not entirely satisfactory in a religious crisis like that that needed clear analysis. Furthermore, the charges did not speak of the feelings and comments of the Muslims in Northern Nigeria and Nigeria as a nation, as regards the religious disturbances in the area and other related issues discussed in this thesis.

Nevertheless, the charges are reliable sources of historical information concerning the issues facing the church in Northern Nigeria and the country in general during the period of Bishop Ogbonyomi’s episcopacy. The charges portrayed issues of the utmost importance to the Christians in Northern Nigeria. What then is the way forward? How can these issues be dealt with in the future? These questions are addressed in the recommendations given below.

In conclusion, the thesis has investigated the issues that faced the Christians in Northern Nigeria. These issues included religious crisis, ethnicity in the politics of the country, secret societies, corruption, education, economy and women ordination and polygamy. The thesis also looked at their effects on the peaceful co-existence of the Christians and the Muslims in Northern Nigeria. It also investigated how Bishop Ogbonyomi responded to the situation in which the Christians found themselves. Bishop Ogbonyomi acknowledged that since Christians in the northern part of the country were in the minority, they had suffered more particularly discrimination, deprivation of many of their rights and religious crises which had left many of them handicapped and demoralised. He thus called on the government of Northern Nigeria and the federal government to introduce stricter measures that would regulate the day-to-day life of the area.³⁵⁹ In the context of the church, he lamented the fact that some Christians and church workers had not lived as the Bible teaches.³⁶⁰

In the earlier days of Christianity in Northern Nigeria, one would expect that the Christian missions would have operated freely in their allocated areas after the colonial

³⁵⁹ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., One-day Synod 1987, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 205.

³⁶⁰ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Ninth Synod of Kaduna Diocese, 1982,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 107.

administration had advised them to occupy the non-Muslim areas. However, Bishop Ogbonyomi and other sources reveal that the missionaries' activities were highly regulated, restricted and monitored, and were in addition barred from Muslim areas.³⁶¹ This caused conflicts and controversies between the Christian missions and the colonial administration. The missions had to apply for permission from the government to operate in any area. However, Christian missionary work in Northern Nigeria had success in establishing the different denominations in the area.

The economic situation in Nigeria and the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria has caused widespread poverty. At the congregational level, Bishop Ogbonyomi blamed the financial incompetence of the church members.³⁶² However it could be argued that the church authorities did not lead the way by example and by conducting campaigns. Other issues concerning education, corruption, secret societies and religious disturbances that are discussed in this thesis continue to be a problem for the Christians in Northern Nigeria. The effort of Bishop Ogbonyomi in addressing the situation is acknowledged, but a lot more must be done to bring about stable co-existence in Northern Nigeria.

With globalisation, all people are becoming increasingly linked together as citizens of one world regardless of colour, tribe, religion or geographic location. They are also functioning and competing in one arena, and poverty and ignorance are increasingly serious handicaps for developing nations. From a more positive perspective, the new idiom that defines the social relations of the future is multi-culturalism, which aims at a common humanity seeking progress on the basis of commonality. Nigeria cannot be excluded from this and if the country is to recover lost ground, it must shed the conflict and mismanagement that has held it back. To achieve that, religion has a role to play, especially as Christianity and Islam are both seeking growth and expansion. However, the quest should not be conflictual. The two faiths should seek to provide a moral compass

³⁶¹ The early correspondence between the CMS and the Colonial Government: NAK: ZARPROF ACC. No.7, C. 7/1919. See also, *General Reports on Missionaries' activities from 1939-1049*; NAK: ZARPROF ACC. No. 31 C. 19/1939. *Mission at Kagoro SIM*; NAK: ZARPROF ACC. 14 c. 41, 1929-1934. *Preaching in Public Places: General Religious Toleration*: NAK: ZARPROF ACC. 255 C. 4082, 1930-1933.

³⁶² Ogbonyomi, Titus E., "Third Session of the Seventh Synod of the Diocese of Northern Nigeria, 1978," in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 39.

for one world and one people. Furthermore, it should look inwardly and help provide direction for their adherents and work to make the society more stable and prosperous.

With regard to the religious disturbances in Northern Nigeria, one might argue that its citizens have long lived with too many myths regarding their differences. The world would not be a better place if everybody was white, yellow, brown or black. Nor would it be so if all people speak one language, or if everyone worships in the same mosque or church. Examples abound of conflicts that can occur in nations with one religion. The genocide in Rwanda is one example. The crisis in the Niger Delta in Nigeria is another. The two faiths should enlighten their adherents that Islam and Christianity were of the same Abrahamic family. Perhaps, the idea of worshipping in the same building, but in different sections of a “Cathedral Mosque” may be considered.

Bishop Ogbonyomi will continue to be remembered and recognized for his work in the Anglican Church and in other denominations in Northern Nigeria. Though he had his weaknesses, his leadership qualities drove the growth experienced in the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria.

11:2 Recommendations on how to deal with the issues facing the church in Northern Nigeria in the future

Having examined the problems affecting the Christians in Northern Nigeria, there is now a need to suggest measures to be taken to solve the problems. Bishop Ogbonyomi recommended that in everything, rushed decision-making was dangerous. Careful studying of an issue will help resolve it amicably as all aspects and eventualities can be carefully considered. He further recommended the re-introduction into the country’s school curriculum of religious education to help combat corruption in the country.³⁶³ He also suggested that for corruption to be brought under control “everybody in the country must kill within himself or herself pride, self interest, hatred, greed, fraud, and

³⁶³ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “Second Session of the Twelfth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1992”, in *The Church of Nigeria*, 1996, p. 341. See also “Third Session of the Twelfth Synod, 1993, p. 354, “Second Session of the Thirteenth Synod, 1995, p. 401 and “Third Session of the Thirteenth Synod, 1996, p. 417.

dishonesty, and a new brigade should be formed that would be empowered to arrest and hand over to the police any member of the society, no matter how powerful and influential, caught offering or receiving bribes.”³⁶⁴

A public campaign against all forms of corruption should be carried out nationwide, but at the same time the church should associate with the sorrows and joys of its members so that they do not turn to secret societies to fulfill their needs. Finally, unity and equality will help to bring about respect for one another and tolerance for each other’s religion and beliefs.

The above recommendations of Bishop Ogbonyomi are acknowledged to be helpful. Nevertheless, further recommendations can be made. Looking at the history of Northern Nigeria, it is clear that religion played a significant role in shaping and developing Northern Nigeria. It is important therefore to embark on a serious awareness campaign with the help of churches and mosques, on the importance of peaceful co-existence in the area. The central tenet of the Christian faith is that God meets exclusion and brutality with a powerful resourceful love that can change the terms of every relationship. This is a truth that both Christianity and Islam can accept and work with.

Christians and Muslims should also learn to know and respect one another in the society. In line with this, a normative framework for the nation, based on the concept of social justice, needs to be developed and that should form the basis for evaluating the legacies of protracted injustice and all acts of social and moral indiscipline that seem rampant in the country. Within such framework, the suggested questions of Galadima and Turaki are to be posed and answered. These questions include:

What normative guidelines that transcend religious, cultural, class and personal proclivities can be used to order social relations and institutional practices? What principles should form the basis of

³⁶⁴ Ogbonyomi, Titus E., “First Session of the Twelfth Synod of the Diocese of Kaduna, 1991,” in *The Church of Nigeria* 1996, p. 326. It should also declare a war on corruption immediately, through which strong and legal sanctions would be imposed on enrichment through public offices. Public officers found guilty of official corruption should be given such sanctions as it would deter others from following their examples.

national integration or consensus, harmony, mutual understanding, and co-operation among the two faiths in the area? What morals should be used to build a just, participatory and sustainable social order? How can the inherited unjust structures and social values of inequality, insecurity and incompatibility of the past be corrected?³⁶⁵

In the following paragraphs, the researcher will apply the suggested questions of Galadima and Turaki to the situation in Northern Nigeria, and to the situation of the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria.

In terms of the guidelines that can be used to order social relations and institutional practices, both the church and the government should develop meaningful programmes of moral transformation. In developing these programmes, the socio-economic development of the people should be a starting point. In other words, improving the living conditions and economic situation of the people is the key to creating a conducive atmosphere for stemming crime and crime-related social problems in the future. This means that while the government should take industrialization and the development of agriculture seriously, the challenge for the church is the proper formation and mobilization of public conscience and opinion against crime.³⁶⁶

Furthermore, there are enormous possibilities for collaboration between the two faiths for social and religious justice, for the defence of human rights, for safe-guarding and promoting the religious freedom of one another, for resolving conflicts peacefully and for addressing the plight of displaced people. They can struggle together towards shared social and political goals. There are many places today in the world where such interchange is part of the day-to-day experience and each religion can gain new insights about the God whom they worship and discover fresh resources which can help them become more humane, more sensitive to the needs of others and more obedient to God's will for all creation, thus fulfilling the purpose for which God has created humankind.

³⁶⁵ Galadima, Bulus Y. and Turaki, Yusufu "The Church in the African State toward the 21st Century: The Experience of Northern Nigeria" in *Journal of African Christian Thought*, June 1998, p. 49.

³⁶⁶ Gana, Jerry *Effect of Corruption on Nigerian Society: Christian Responsibility in the Fight against Corruption* Bukuru Jos: TCNN, 2000, p. 3.

In addition, humanity experiences conflicts and stresses in daily life, particularly in a country like Nigeria, with its myriad problems. Deciding on when and how to cope can be difficult. When internal conflicts are not well managed, the accumulated disorder generates tension that is transferred to others. As human beings are gregarious and need one another to survive, they must also understand that conflict is a pervasive part of their lives which must be dealt with constructively. Both the Muslims and the Christians in Northern Nigeria should be prepared to say that the violation of human rights in whatever form is not good and should not be canonised, whoever perpetrates it.

Regarding the principles that are needed to foster national unity between the two faiths in Northern Nigeria, Christians and Muslims in the area should be on the alert to guard against further occurrences of religious violence in the area. They should learn to co-exist peacefully and harmoniously, whether in a multi-religious state or not. The aim of every individual should (as a recipient and custodian of a revealed religion) be to live peacefully with one another.³⁶⁷ This is important because it highlights that the cause of the violence has very little to do with a particular religion in the area. Being an adherent of the one religion or the other is not the issue, rather the issue is that people feel they are being marginalized or oppressed. What Christians say of Islam in Northern Nigeria is what is said of Christianity in Southern and Eastern Nigeria, where Christians are dominant. The challenge therefore is not to deny or even seek to vindicate the fears or allegations, but to come to terms with them and to cooperate to eradicate them in the future. Those who are feeling oppressed should be helped to feel that they are citizens, by having a platform that can guarantee equality before the law. This equality should include the freedom of each to fulfill his or her potential, with the state and church facilitating the process.

Furthermore, the people in Northern Nigeria should be aware that information can be altered, misinterpreted and then circulated, creating further potential for conflict so that they should not print what amounts to “hate speech”. The mass media should thus be

³⁶⁷ Yero, Yahaya Ibraheem *Nigeria as a Multi-Religious State: Meaning and Implication* Jos: Study Centre, Muryar Bishara, 23rd-28th August 1999, pp. 6&10.

controlled and supervised. People are daily exposed through radio and television to violence. They are bombarded with footage and photographs of destroyed homes, churches, mosques, and properties, dead and wounded people, the desperate plight of refugees and other unpleasant images. Reports of crimes and human rights abuses abound. These reports and images have inflamed much of the religious violence in the Northern Nigeria. To be able to reduce such crises in the future, the mass media should also cover successful events and peaceful initiatives, as well as developmental programmes. In line with this, peace and conflict resolution studies should be included in the school curriculum, so that children are oriented towards, peaceful co-existence. What should be taught should be practical, because peace is a way of life, not a theory.

In terms of how a just, participatory and sustainable society can be build, the Anglican Church in Northern Nigeria should deal with the problem of poverty among its members. For this to be achieved, it must be a church that embraces both the rich and the poor. It must be a church that sees and thinks from the perspective of all without favoritism. It must be a church that does not just speak on behalf of the poor, but one that educates and empowers the poor to speak for themselves and to struggle out of their situation. There is a strong inter-connection between social, economic and political components of social systems.³⁶⁸ Therefore, the church should also look for ways that would correct the economic and political situations of Nigeria that have adversely affected the socio-moral behaviour of the people in Northern Nigeria. The church and the government should look for ways to develop its people. Central to peace and development are the youth on whom the future depends. The government should develop job opportunities for them, because skilful and intelligent youths are unemployed, are idle and frustrated, roaming the streets in hunger, homelessness and abject poverty. The police and other security agencies, in whose hands the national security lies, should be properly equipped. Finally, discipline and morality should become the norm once more, and these qualities are what lie at the heart of Bishop Ogbonyomi's charges.

³⁶⁸Cutright, Philips "Natural Political Development: Its Measurement and Social Correlations" in Probsby, Nelson W., et al (eds.) *Political and Social Life* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1963, pp. 577-578. See also Neubauer, Deanne E., "Some Conditions of Democracy". In Ball, Howard and Lauth Jr, Thomas p. (eds.) *Changing Perspectives in Contemporary Political Analysis*, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1971, p. 366. Lippert, S.M., *Political Man* New York: Doubleday, 1960, Chapter 2&3.

Year	Sec ret Soc		Islam		Corruption		Educa tion		Politic s of ethnic		Econ omy		New Dioc ese		Wome n and Polyg		Current church matters		Total lines	
	Lin	%	Lin es	%	Lines	%	Lines	%	Lines	%	Lines	%	Line s	%	Lines	%	Lines	%	Lines	%
1976	95	20					60	13	55	11	82	17	78	16			110	23	480	100
1977	41	6	168	26			104	16			98	15	157	24			82	13	650	100
1978	40	7	50	9			100	17			207	35	44	7			147	25	588	100
1979					96	18			60	12	42	8	220	42			102	20	520	100
1980			46	10					138	30	73	16	72	16			131	28	460	100
1981			92	18	105	21					110	22	38	8			155	31	500	100
1982					322	75					80	18					36	7	438	100
1983	15	4	40	10					161	39	125	31	23	6			43	10	409	100
1984					250	59					64	15	25	6			87	20	426	100
1985			216	38	60	11	123	22			80	14					81	15	560	100
1986			708	64			18	2	36	3	25	2	249	23			62	6	1098	100
1987	85	15	214	38							48	9	68	12			145	26	560	100
1988	124	35	63	18			28	8			49	13	38	11			53	15	355	100
1989			104	17	112	19			41	7	139	23	83	14	74	12	50	8	603	100
1990			189	23	234	28	34	4	64	8	58	7	186	22			70	8	735	100
1991	98	14	30	4	225	32	28	4	82	12	70	10					169	24	702	100
1992			224	46	44	9	56	12	23	5	63	13					73	15	483	100
1993			199	28	111	15	113	16	134	19	87	12					75	10	719	100
1994	93	15	125	21	34	6	16	3	63	10	48	8	21	3	83	14	119	20	602	100
1995			55	11	46	10	92	19	52	11			61	13	33	7	141	29	480	100
1996	95	18	78	15	98	19	90	17	56	11	34	7					70	13	521	100
Total	686	134	2601	396	1737	322	862	153	965	178	1582	295	1363	223	190	33	2001	366	11889	21000
%		6		19		15		7		9		14		11		2		17		100
=		6%		19%		15%		7%		9%		14%		11%		2%		17%		100%

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