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The Anglican Church of Nigeria: A Beacon of Orthodoxy in a Changing Anglican Communion

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Abstract

The Anglican Church of Nigeria, with its rich history and commitment to orthodox teachings, has emerged as a significant player in the Anglican Communion. In response to the revisionist agenda of some Western provinces, particularly on issues of human sexuality, the Church of Nigeria has taken bold steps to promote and defend traditional Anglican values regarding human sexuality. This has led to the establishment of missionary initiatives in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, catering to Nigerians and other orthodox Anglicans who cannot identify with the liberal teachings of their local churches. The Church of Nigeria has consecrated bishops and ordained clergy to provide Episcopal care and oversight to these congregations, ensuring the continuity of orthodox Anglicanism. With a strong commitment to mission and evangelism, the Church of Nigeria is taking the gospel back to the Western world, reversing the traditional missionary trend. This paper explores the Church of Nigeria's role in the Anglican Communion, its response to the revisionist agenda, and its mission

to promote and defend traditional Anglican values in a rapidly changing Anglican Communion.

Keywords: *Anglicanism; Beacon; Orthodoxy; Change; Communion.*

Introduction

The Anglican Church is a Christian denomination comprising of churches with historical affinity to the Church of England, with its doctrines, liturgical worship, ecclesiastical orders and administrative structures. Ezeakunne (2016) states that the Anglican Church also known as the Anglican Communion is an international association of national and regional Anglican churches in full communion with the Church of England and specifically with its principal primate, the Archbishop of Canterbury. There is no “Anglican Church” with universal juridical authority over others as each national or regional church has full autonomy. The fellowship strings binding these Churches together means ideally that there is mutual agreement on essential doctrines, and that full participation in the sacramental life of each national or regional church is available to all communicant Anglicans from elsewhere in the Anglican Communion while each Church operates autonomously within the strands of the Anglican traditions it inherited.

The Anglican Church came to Nigeria in 1841 at Aboh in the present day Delta State, but was firmly established in 1842 at Badargry in Lagos State; the Anglicans in the country achieved the status of an autonomous Province in 1979. “The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)” is the official designation of the Anglican denomination in Nigeria. The Church of Nigeria has its headquarters in Abuja, from where the Archbishop, Metropolitan, and Primate of All Nigeria, who must also be the Bishop of Abuja, as well as the archbishop of the ecclesiastical Province of Abuja is the leader of the Anglican Church in Nigeria. The official website of the Church puts the estimated membership of the Anglican Church in Nigeria at eighteen million people, while the estimated population of Anglicans worldwide is around 80 million. Thus, the Anglican Communion is the third largest Christian Communion in the world, after the Roman Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox Churches.

The Significance of the Church of Nigeria in the Anglican Communion

Since the advent of the Anglican Church in the mid-19th century in Nigeria, the Church's mission has spread to almost all nooks and crannies of the country. The Anglican Church of Nigeria with all its constituent parts comprises one hundred and sixty-one dioceses under the fourteen ecclesiastical provinces spread across every part of Nigeria. Amagada (2010) states that the Anglican Church in Nigeria is by far the fastest growing province in the Anglican Communion; the Province was formerly under the Province of West Africa until 1979 when the then sixteen Anglican dioceses were constituted into a separate Province with Archbishop Timothy Olufosoye as its first Primate. Since 1979, the Province has grown to its present 161 dioceses grouped under the present fourteen ecclesiastical provinces. The Church of Nigeria is the second largest province after the Church of England in the world-wide Anglican Communion. The Province of Nigeria by this fact is clearly destined to lead African Anglicanism and the rest of the other provinces that uphold orthodox teachings and other tenets of Anglicanism in modern times. One of the strongest factors powering the dramatic growth of Anglicanism in Nigeria and the rest of Africa is obviously faithfulness and loyalty to orthodox biblical faith as against the global north where secularism seems to have seriously corroded Christian orthodoxy across all denominations.

In Nigeria where Christianity is facing a serious inter-faith conflict with Islam and Traditional Religion, and a raging competition between Christian denominations, any church that wants to maintain relevance must be absolutely clear about its teaching and mission mandate. This is made more compelling considering that fundamentalist Muslims and adherents of the Traditional Religion regard Christianity as an agent of colonialism and moral decay of the western world. This implies that any sign of doctrinal unsteadiness will invariably lead to loss of credibility and subsequent migration of members to other denominations and even sects in a bid to avoid being identified with a heretical and confused church.

Nigeria's potential for leadership in the struggle against revisionism and the decline of traditional Anglican teachings could be traced back to the last Lambeth Conference of 1998. With the rapid growth of Anglicanism in Africa and Nigeria in particular, Lambeth Conference of 1998 marked a significant increase in the number of participating bishops

from sub-Saharan Africa who also had a larger influence and a louder collective voice in the affairs of the Anglican Communion.

The Need for New Missions

Apart from the nagging issues of human sexuality in the Anglican Church and other Christian denominations, revisionists who are proponents of radical liberalism have occasionally rocked the Anglican Church polity in questioning the reliability of some doctrinal concepts of the Church. Petre (cited by Germond, 2004) notes that in the 1980s, the bishop of Durham, David Jenkins caused a scandal when he denied the bodily resurrection of Jesus, a cardinal Christian belief. In the fallout, a poll was taken of the United Kingdom's thirty-one Diocesan bishops and two-thirds of them were of the opinion that it was not necessary to accept the divinity of Christ to be a Christian, and one-third denied a belief in the physical resurrection. Because of the progress of secular enlightenment, a growing number of Christians in the West no longer try to challenge or transform the spirit of the post-modern secular culture and this lax attitude has dire implications for Christianity's witness and influence on modern society. In this trajectory of thought, Blamires (1999) points out the formidable hostility that Christianity faces from those developed Western countries once regarded as bulwarks of Christian civilization. He states *inter alia*:

Looking around us, we...cannot but be aware of how powerful and insidious is the assault on the faith we hold, the faith we have assumed to be the foundation of Western culture. Current secularist humanism—a mishmash of relativistic notions negating traditional values and absolutes infects the intellectual air we breathe (p. 9).

Race (1993) commenting on the effect of the decline of religious traditions and morality in modern society states that when the unquestioned authority of religion and tradition declines, the large and difficult task which faces an individual is how to access and appropriate the wide range of different philosophies and worldviews that can be paraded before him. Whereas the world was once thought to be largely controlled by deities, modern man is much likely to explore and experience the world as an arena in which he is responsible for his own pleasures and progress. Berger (1980) terms this down-turn “the heretical imperative”. He surmises thus:

For pre-modern man, heresy was a possibility—usually a rather remote one; for modern man, heresy typically becomes a necessity. Or again, modernity creates a new situation in which picking and choosing becomes an imperative. Here it simply means the making of choices in a world where the theological and socially institutionalized authoritative backing termed the “plausibility structures”...cannot be taken for granted. Living heretically has become a matter of fact (p. 28).

The fact that heresies occasionally emanate from the highly secularized Western Christianity is a matter that should be regarded as inevitable. Though the implosion that these deviations generated did not immediately create the threat of massive schism in the Communion, it most obviously created an urgent need for a re-evangelization of the erring sections of the Communion, and this is the task which the theologically-conservative provinces of the Anglican Communion including Nigeria undertook with dispatch.

The All African Bishops' Conference

The unfolding disaffection in the Anglican Communion on the issues of homosexuality made it imperative for like-minded sections of the Church to forge closer relationships to defend traditional Anglican teachings on human sexuality and pursue their stated common goals. The province of Nigeria accordingly mobilized other conservative provinces in the Communion to actualize their vision. Riding on the tide of theological confusion created by the manifest acts of deviation from parts of the Church in the USA and Canada in 2003, especially in the ordination and consecration of homosexuals, Nigeria's Primate, Peter Akinola, who was the Chairman of the Conference of Anglican Provinces in Africa summoned a meeting of all the Anglican bishops in Africa for the first time in the history of the Anglican Communion. Iheagwam (cited by Okoye, 2010) states that this maiden conference was held in Lagos from October 26 to November 1, 2004 with the theme, “Africa Comes of Age: An Anglican Self-Evaluation”. This conference took place soon after the release of the Windsor Report and it provided the needed platform for participants to restate their disapproval of the ordination and consecration of people in same-sex relationship. Iheagwam further commenting on the issue refers to the Primate's keynote address as follows:

The time has come for us to look at these problems and address them from our well-informed native understanding rather than Western-imposed and alien misinterpretation. Africa has lost so much and we cannot in this century afford the luxury of allowing anyone or any situation to take us into further controversy which has become the favorite preoccupation of some of our brothers within the Church in other parts of the world (p. 94).

The role of the Province of Nigeria in hosting the conference was outstanding in many ways. Amagada (2010) states that the Church of Nigeria sponsored many African bishops who hitherto depended on Western foreign aid for any such international travel and involvement in church consultations. In the light of the foregoing, Iheagwam states the goodwill message sent in by the Rev. Canon Ellis Brust on behalf of the American Anglican Council as follows:

You have thrown us a lifeline to rescue us from a sinking ship. God has anointed the Anglican Church in Africa for such a time as this. I am thankful for our partnership in the Gospel from the first day till now. God bless you and God bless the African Anglican Bishops' Conference (p. 96).

A similar conciliatory and apologetic reaction also came from Bishop Bob Duncan of America representing the Anglican Communion Network (ACN). The message reads in part:

I know it is hard for you in Africa to understand that a Primate would not speak for all his people. I tell you clearly that the Primate in the United States and the Primate in Canada do not speak for all their people. I came also to ask your forgiveness for the trouble we in the West have caused you. I have come to ask your forgiveness for our complicity, the complicity of the orthodox in the West's unfaithfulness. For too long we were far too silent, made too many compromises. I have also come to ask your forgiveness for the evils of our culture exported to you daily electronically.... I have to thank God that Africa has finally come of age – and with that coming of age there is a new and better future ahead for Anglicanism.... An extraordinary new day is dawning for all (p. 97).

Apart from the obvious reluctance of Nigerian Anglican bishops to attend the 2008 Lambeth Conference, one of the preconditions to be met for their attendance was that the Archbishop of Canterbury would

have to also invite the English-born Bishop Martyn Minns, consecrated by the Church of Nigeria to serve as a missionary bishop to the conservatives in the USA. To this, the Archbishop of Canterbury was not ready to do, having not recognized Minns, the first American bishop consecrated by the Anglican Church of Nigeria as a bishop in the Anglican Communion in the first place. Another factor that precipitated an African missionary push into America was the outcome of the Global South Steering Committee meeting in London, July 16-18, 2007. The meeting issued a statement denouncing the revisionist actions of the Episcopal Church in America and the Anglican Church in Canada. The meeting also noted the building pressure for a separate meeting of orthodox Anglicans, and Article 11 states:

We have received requests from around the Communion to call a gathering of Anglican Communion leaders. We expect to call a Fourth Global South Encounter to bring faithful Anglican leaders across the Communion to renew our focus on the apostolic faith and our common mission (p. 3).

The Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) - a parallel meeting to the traditional Anglican Lambeth Conference held in Jerusalem in 2008 by the conservatives established and instituted the Global Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans (GFCA) with the stated aim and objective of furthering the mission of conservative Anglican pastoral work in the revisionist enclaves of the Anglican Communion. This group is composed of individuals who are united in the communion of one spirit, committed to work and pray together in the common mission of the Church. It also includes provinces, dioceses, churches, missionary jurisdictions, and para-church organizations which have the common goal of helping to reform, heal and revitalize the Anglican Communion.

The Convocation of Anglicans in North America (CANA)

The Church of Nigeria's response to the acts of doctrinal deviation by sections of the Western Churches brought into being new missionary ventures that helped to reshape mission and pastoral relationships within the Anglican Communion. Reaction to the extremities of the revisionists in the West has never been limited to non-Western sections of the Anglican Church. Lewis (1999) reports that several splinter groups were formed over the years, protesting the

departure from orthodoxy on the part of the Episcopal Church. Among these were the Southern Episcopal Church, the Anglican Orthodox Church, and the American Episcopal Church. Organizations such as the Fellowship of Concerned Church-men and the Society for the Preservation of the Book of Common Prayer were also formed in the USA. Even before the bubble finally burst in the Anglican Communion regarding disagreement in matters of human sexuality, Kew and White (1997) had stated the potential reasons for dissent by some members of the Episcopal Church in America, leading to their leaving the Church. Some of these include:

1. Dislike of the positions taken by the Church leaders, whether they are too “conservative” or too “liberal”
2. Dislike of specific views on sexuality: either the Episcopal Church is sexually too inclusive, prepared to accept and ordain non-celibate homosexuals too readily, or it is utterly homophobic, with gay and lesbian people persecuted and denied full participation.
3. The Episcopal Church has drifted away from its theological moorings. It no longer takes the scripture or its apostolic traditions seriously, and is reluctant to reflect theologically before it acts or speaks (p. 151).

Following what may be called an implosion due to the internal tension in the Episcopal Church in America, Kew and White conclude that a cross section of the laity, bishops, priests and deacons who consider themselves part of the theological “orthodox” wings of the Church met in Northbrook Illinois, to form the American Anglican Council. For these people, who feel that their biblical and Catholic sensibilities have been compromised within the Episcopal Church, it is an attempt to find new ways to be the “Church”. Adams (2008) also points to the fact that this model has been adapted and applied to the Episcopal Church, with its institution of the Delegated Episcopal Pastoral Oversight (DEPO). This is the concept of individual congregations or dioceses not being bound to be under the pastoral care of their duly elected geographical diocesan bishop or presiding bishop. This provision already in place proved a launching-pad for the intervention of bishops and primates of other provinces in the USA as well, at the height of the schism generated over the sharp disagreement in sexual morality. Dimobika (2014) points out that one of the points of the Communiqué after the Global South Anglican Primates Meeting in Kigali September 2006 under the leadership of Nigeria’s Archbishop, Peter Akinola, was a

reaction that would later result in the creation of a Convocation of Churches in the USA. The Primates stated:

The ECUSA appears to have no intention of changing direction and once again embracing the faith once delivered.... We are now convinced that the time has now come to take initial steps towards the formation of what will be recognized as a separate ecclesiastical structure of the Anglican Communion in the USA.... We believe that we would be failing our apostolic witness if we do not make this provision for those who hold firm to a commitment to historic Anglican faith (pp. 53-54).

The fore-going factors laid the foundation for the establishment of the Convocation of Anglicans in North America to cater for those Anglicans who want to remain faithful to orthodox Anglican doctrines and traditions.

The Consecration of Missionary Bishops

Following the unrelenting agenda of the Western Churches on the issue of homosexuals in the Church, African and other primates in the Global South took the initiative of consecrating some orthodox Anglican clergymen as bishops to give Episcopal direction to conservative Anglicans in America. Iheagwam (cited by Okoye, 2010) chronicles the significant consecrations as follows:

1. On January 29,2000 Archbishop Moses Tay of South East Asia and Archbishop Emmanuel Kolini Primate of Rwanda consecrated two conservative Episcopal Church USA priests – Rev'd Charles Murphy III and the Very Rev'd Dr. John Rodgers bishops in St Andrew's Cathedral Church, Singapore. Their consecration was intended to “bring Episcopal care and comfort to clergy and congregations trying to maintain historic faith in the face of increasingly hostile conditions in ECUSA.” Archbishop Kolini also started the Anglican Mission in America (AMiA) which was sponsored locally in America by the Rwanda Episcopal Church. Though the then Archbishop of Canterbury Dr. George Carey declared the consecrations irresponsible and irregular, and contrary to Anglican rules and practice, they still held.
2. Bishops Bill Atwood and William Murdoch were consecrated to oversee some former ECUSA congregations under the supervision of the Anglican Provinces of Kenya and Uganda.

Many Nigerians in the USA also found it increasingly difficult to identify with Anglican communities, and thus were tempted to worship in other denominations after the deviations by the Episcopal Church and the Westminster Diocese in Canada. The reaction from the Church of Nigeria precipitated the formation of the Convocation of Anglicans in North America (CANA). The Standing Committee of the Church of Nigeria recognizing this urgent need to cater for Nigerian Anglicans in America initiated a process for the provision of pastoral care through the formation of a Convocation within the USA. Church of Nigeria Today Newsletter (2006) states that what started as an outreach to provide a safe harbour for Nigerians soon became overwhelmed with requests for participation from other people, thus fast-tracking the formation of CANA. Announcing the formation of the Convocation in April 2005, Archbishop Akinola writes “Our intention is not to challenge or intervene in the Churches of ECUSA and the Anglican Church of Canada but rather to provide a safe harbour for those who can no longer find their spiritual home in those Churches” (p. 7). In September 2005, at the 8th General Synod of the Church of Nigeria at Onitsha, the necessary constitutional changes were made to permit the formal establishment of the Convocation in the USA and by November, the necessary legal framework to establish CANA as a recognized Anglican Church structure in the USA was completed and CANA was inaugurated. In the same vein, the Church of Nigeria entered into a covenant agreement with the Reformed Episcopal Church and the Anglican Province of America, Churches that have also separated from the ECUSA on doctrinal issues and their bishops were very supportive of the Nigerian initiative. Akinola (2007) states that in spite of hostile actions and legal threats, CANA membership has grown to include almost 60 congregations and approximately 100 clergy—with another 25 in the process for ordination. More congregations are in the process regarding registration with CANA. Geographical distribution is widespread in the USA, with CANA congregations in eighteen different states from California to Connecticut and from Wyoming to Florida: fifteen congregations and eighteen clergy are expatriate Nigerians.

The tremendous growth of CANA made the need to have a US-based bishop very pressing, as ECUSA remained unwilling either to change course or refrain from persecuting orthodox Anglicans. This necessitated the election of Bishop Martyn Minns as the first Bishop of CANA. According to Today Newsletter (2006) Minns, an

English-born clergyman of Truro Fairfax, Virginia in the USA, was on Sunday August 20, 2006, consecrated a bishop in the first ever consecration of bishops in the then recently dedicated National Christian Centre Abuja. The significance of Minns' consecration dwarfed that of the other three candidates – a white American made bishop by the Church of Nigeria to supervise the missionary initiative in America. Amagada (2010) reports that after the consecration of Bishop Martyn Minns in Nigeria, ECUSA's leadership made frantic efforts to abort his installation as a bishop in the USA. Firstly, ECUSA persuaded the Archbishop of Canterbury to urge Archbishop Akinola who was already in the US then to cancel the installation. This was declined. Amagada states further:

Days before the installation, Episcopal Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori urged the Nigerian leader not to visit the United States...that it would violate Anglican tradition, that national Church leaders...only minister to churches within their own Provinces...Akinola responded by saying that "the usual protocol and permission are no longer applicable" because of ... the unbiblical agenda of the United States Church (p. 38).

As the Anglican Communion's spiritual leader, Rowan Williams, did not have a direct authority to stop Akinola or to force a compromise, Bishop Minns was duly installed to lead CANA as commissioned by the Church of Nigeria. The CANA initiative has recorded a resounding success, as it subsequently developed into three dioceses – CANA East, CANA West and the Anglican Diocese of the Trinity (A.D.O.T.T.). Church Year Calendar (2020) states that the then functioning two dioceses - CANA West Diocese and the Anglican Diocese of the Trinity (A.D.O.T.T.) have a combined total of 61 Parishes between them, spread across more than eleven states in the US with five of these in Canada. They also have a total of ninety-four clergymen mostly expatriate priests from Nigeria. These two dioceses in America have an organized annual synod and established administrative structures typical of any local Anglican diocesan setting in the Church of Nigeria, with virtually all clergy and other officials being Nigerians.

The Church of Nigeria Mission in North America (CONNAM)

Following some functional challenges of the CANA mission, the Church of Nigeria legally dissolved the CANA and changed its name to The

Church of Nigeria Mission in North America (CONNAM). Ndukuba (2022) in his opening address to the Church of Nigeria Standing Committee in Abuja on the need for the sustenance of the mission states inter alia:

The Church of Nigeria is not interested in an expansionist move in America. We have our sons and daughters who are strongly connected to their home in Nigeria. The heresy of The Episcopal Church and the move to making the abominable Homosexuality and the denial of the uniqueness of Jesus Christ as the Saviour and Lord of the Church, the denial of the authority of the Scripture in America necessitated that we provide a Spiritual Safe Harbour where our people can worship and live out their Christian faith and calling. ...We have enough people, bishops and dioceses in Nigeria that we serve. We have enough problems to wrestle with. We are not in America to make money from America... CONNAM remains the mission of the Church of Nigeria and we have no intention of abandoning our brothers and sisters and other Anglican faithful who love to serve God as guided by the Anglican Heritage as received by the Church of Nigeria (pp. 39-40).

Later in the year 2022 during his address of welcome to the participants of the annual Divine Common Wealth Conference (DIVVCON) at the National Christian Centre, Abuja, he further reports that:

Our foreign mission work and opportunity have continued to enlarge. We have Nigerian Anglican clergy serving as missionaries in every part of the globe, including dangerous places where the gospel is prohibited. This is not a territorial expansion of the Church of Nigeria but a missional move to the Global Church into God's missions. Our missions and ministries in North America and the United Kingdom are waxing strong despite all the challenges (pp. 11-12).

From the CANA heritage, CONNAM presently has three dioceses and four ecclesiastical Zones that are run by bishops consecrated by the Church of Nigeria, and a host of both Nigerian expatriates and conservative American clergy men, along with lay workers. The mission of CONNAM has continued to grow in leaps and bounds and may produce more dioceses in the future as the zones manned by suffragan bishops are most likely to grow into full dioceses.

The Mission to the United Kingdom

This mission which is known as the UK/Europe Missions is also growing as part of the reaction to preserve conservative Anglicanism in

Britain and on mainland Europe. Commenting on the rather sad role liberalists have played in British Anglicanism, Treloar (2008) states that the Church of England's Wolfenden Report of 1957 recommends that "homosexual behavior between consenting adults in private be no longer a criminal offence." This report is credited with having a direct influence on the decriminalization of homosexuality in Great Britain and in forcing a reconsideration of the issue by the Anglican and other Christian churches in Great Britain. Yet, despite its liberally progressive line, that report still paradoxically speaks of homosexuality as presented in terms of an illness with its own peculiar etiology, and as having the same remedy of psychiatric and hormonal treatment. The Wolfenden Report trivializes the issue of same-sex sexuality as something that can be controlled like coughing and lapses into implicitly connecting homosexuality with the tolerability level and the passiveness with which the problems pedophilia and promiscuity are regarded in the church and the larger society. The remaining inhibitions against homosexuality subsequently evaporated with time both in the British society and within a greater part of the Church of England as the forces of revisionism made further in-roads on religion and the society.

In Great Britain, a similar strain on relationships between liberals and conservatives was playing out as in the United States of America and Canada. Adams (2008) states that the Church of England created the loophole in the Anglican polity for boundary crossing when it passed the 'Act of Synod' in 1993 endorsing the use of "flying bishops" at the height of the earlier theological tussle on the ordination and consecration of women. This is a plan which allows sex-and-gender conservative parishes to refuse to welcome geographical bishops who ordained women, and to request the Episcopal office of another bishop with "clean hands" – bishops who object to the ordination of women. Candidates for ordination are also allowed to request a "clean hands" flying bishop from a theologically-conservative diocese to ordain them after their theological training. A similar measure to that of CANA in America was being pursued in the United Kingdom to cater for "stranded" Nigerian Anglicans there. Not as expansive as the Convocation of Anglicans in North America, the Church of Nigeria Mission in the United Kingdom is presently at the level of a Chaplaincy. The successor to Archbishop Akinola, Nicholas Okoh in his Opening Address to the Church's Standing Committee in Lagos in September 2010 stated:

We intend to reach a decision on the spiritual plight of Nigerian Anglicans in the United Kingdom. As you know, they find it difficult to feel at home in most Church of England congregations in the neighborhood. We need to fashion out something which will have a Nigerian flavour and content, and which will be acceptable to the authorities in the Church of England (p. 8).

The Church of Nigeria established the United Kingdom Chaplaincy and this Chaplaincy is also reaching out to Nigerian Anglicans in other parts of Europe in conjunction with the Church of Nigeria Missionary Society (CNMS) mission outreach. Ndukuba (2022) in his Standing Committee Opening Address further stated:

The Foreign Mission is growing, and plans are in place to grow mission fields. We receive reports from Europe and UK; Japan; the Gulf and Asian countries, South America, East and Central Africa, and the West African Region. We are working on developing our Global Mission Strategic Evangelization Programme. We had a strategic Mission Fellowship with Nigerian priests serving in the UK and Europe ... in Birmingham. We resolved that our recruitment for missions will be based on the needs of the mission zones (p. 41).

The Opening Address also notes that the encroachment and fast spread of Islam in the South American countries has precipitated the Church of Nigeria Missions to carry out surveys and studies to determine Mission engagement in these Latin America and Roman Catholic dominated countries, pointing out the problems of lack of funds and the fewness of labourers and supporters as set-backs for the mission. Thus, Latin American countries, the Gulf States and Japan will be the next focus in the ever expanding foreign mission enterprise of the Anglican Church of Nigeria in the future.

Conclusion

As seen in this paper, the Anglican Church of Nigeria has been in the forefront of the fight among the ranks of the conservatives rooting for the biblical orthodox teachings of the Anglican Communion on sexual ethics, and played a key role in marshalling other provinces of the Communion to confront the revisionist agenda of some prominent Anglican provinces in the Western world regarding homosexuality. Consequently, it became necessary for the Anglican Church in Nigeria to strengthen her teaching ministry among her members, make legislative

adjustments in her Canon law, and venture out into an organized but previously un-charted territory of foreign missions to the Western world as counter-measures to protect her age-long orthodox theological inheritance.

Nigerian Anglicanism, from the findings of this paper has made and is still making concerted efforts to shield orthodox Anglicans in America, Canada, Britain and Europe from the pressure mounted by those canvassing for the acceptance of sexual aberrations, by sending missionaries from Africa, and ordaining and consecrating conforming clergy and bishops in the liberal areas, supervised and partly funded from Nigeria. This sustained, capital-intensive effort has led to the birthing of three dioceses operating across the USA and Canada, with the prospects of more Church Zones of the mission growing into full-fledged dioceses.

This implies Africans taking the gospel back to the Western world from where it came, as missionaries, for the re-evangelization and re-conversion of lapsed, erring and nominal Christians. This is a significant reversal of the missionary tide in modern times, an enterprise precipitated by the lapses created by the theological rascality and the decline of traditional doctrines and practices of Anglicanism in the developed countries of the West. This decline is in tandem with the general decline of religion in the developed countries of the world where people are steadily becoming more tilted to the secular preferences of our modern world, to the detriment of the long-held traditional religion-based ethics and morality, a situation which conservative Churches in parts of the Anglican Communion seek to rectify.

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