

CHURCH OF THE PROVINCE OF WEST AFRICA (ANGLICAN)
[INTERNAL PROVINCE OF GHANA]

DIOCESE OF ACCRA

FIRST SESSION OF TWENTY-SECOND SYNOD

DIOCESAN BISHOP'S CHARGE

By

RT. REV'D DR. DANIEL SYLVANUS MENSAH TORTO

JULY 15 – JULY 17 2015

At

CHRIST ANGLICAN CHURCH,
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA,
LEGON

GREETINGS:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ through whom we have received favour and membership as synod delegates to bring about the growth and expansion of the Kingdom of God through the Anglican Diocese of Accra.

WELCOME

On behalf of the Synod Planning Committee and on my own behalf, I welcome you all to the **First Session of Twenty-second Synod**, especially those who are sitting in Synod for the first time. It is our hope that you will contribute your quota towards the development of the church, and let me charge you the *first timers* with the passage of scripture from the Book of Exodus 23:2 ("**Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong. When you give testimony in a lawsuit, do not pervert justice by siding with the crowd, NIV**"). To the “Methuselah’s” of Synod, it is our hope that you will continue to give your best for the development of the Diocese.

TRANSITION

Since our last synod the Lord has called to rest our beloved Rev. Fr. Joshua Annor, Parish Priest of St. James, Anyaa. He died on Monday, 23rd March 2015, and was buried on Friday, 8th May 2015.

Text of Scripture: (Isaiah 7: 1-9b)

When Ahaz son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, was king of Judah, King Rezin of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel marked up to fight against Jerusalem, but they could not overpower it.

²Now the house of David was told, “Aram has allied itself with Ephraim”; so the hearts of Ahaz and his people were shaken, as the trees of the forest are shaken by the wind.

³Then the Lord said to Isaiah, “Go out, you and your son Shear-Jashub, to meet Ahaz at the end of the aqueduct of the Upper Pool, on the road to the Launderer’s Field. ⁴Say to Him, ‘Be careful, keep calm and don’t be afraid. Do not lose heart because of these two smoldering stubs of firewood – because of the fierce anger of Rezin and Aram and of the son of Remaliah. ⁵Aram, Ephraim and Remaliah’s son have plotted your ruin, saying, ⁶“Let us invade Judah; let us tear it apart and divide it among ourselves, and make the son of Tabeel king over it.” ⁷Yet this is what the Sovereign LORD says:

“It will not take place,
 It will not happen,
⁸for the head of Aram is Damascus,
 And the head of Damascus is only Rezin
 Within sixty-five years
 Ephraim will be too shattered to be a people.
⁹The head of Ephraim is Samaria,
 And the head of Samaria is only Remaliah’s son.
 If you do not stand firm in your faith,
 You will not stand at all.””

My brothers and sisters, we seem to be living in times of increasing uncertainty and difficulty. We face worldwide economic uncertainty. In this country we have seen the collapse of major corporations, and many have suffered unemployment or serious financial loss as a result. The recent floods and fire outbreaks have added to our woes. It sometimes seems as if that which we much thought we could rely on is proving undependable. There is a sense that everything is moving faster, becoming more intense, and less predictable. How do we deal with this uncertainty? Hence our theme of Synod

Theme: “Stand firm in the faith”.

Considering our text of Scripture, Rezin and Pekah – kings of Aram and Israel made alliance against the King of Judah. The Lord God said to the king of Judah: “Calm down and be quiet; don’t be afraid or faint-hearted because of these two smoldering stubs of firebrands (vs. 4); it will not happen; it will not occur (vs.7); ***if you do not stand firm in your faith you will not stand at all***(vs. 9b). So it happened that they couldn’t succeed. “They could not succeed”. The phrase, could not, implies that they tried, but were void of power. The confederacy planned against Ahaz, King of Judah could not succeed because the Lord emphatically had said that it would not happen; it would not occur. It was emphatically because He had said it twice. Two against one is powerless when the Lord God is not on their side.

In the Lamentations of Jeremiah, Chpt. 3: 37, we have the confirmation: “Who is there who speaks and it happens, unless the Lord has ordained it”? And Paul confirms it: If God is for us, who is against us? He did not even spare His own Son, but offered Him up for us all (Romans 8:31-32). After the Lord had told Ahaz that the confederacy was not going to happen, He gave him a warning: “If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all” (vs.9b). God had given His word, and now Ahaz had to stand firm on these words to believe in faith on which he had to stand before the enemies, if he had to stand at all. How does one know

that God is on his side when the storm rises against him? The psalmist prayed, “Search my heart O God and see if there is any wicked way in me and lead me in your righteousness” (Psalm 139: 23-24). A search of the heart will be necessary for one to know which side the Lord is on. Jeremiah in his lamentations said, “Do not both adversity and good come from the mouth of the Most High? Why should any living person complain, any man, because of the punishment for his sins”(Lamentations 3:37-39).

God will never take a stand to defend us when sin is the cause of our pain. When the plans from the evil one are without basis, they will not succeed against us, for we are secured in God’s shelter. Before His ordeal, Jesus made sure to warn Peter by telling him to persevere in prayer for him not to fall into temptation and, on another occasion, Jesus warned Peter by saying: Simon, Simon, Look out! Satan has asked to sift you like wheat; but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail; and when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers (Luke 22:31-32). In the hour of his temptation, because Peter did not stand firm on his ground of the warning words of the Savior; He had no faith to believe them; he sided with the devil instead, and fell into temptation to sin against his friend. Denying knowing someone, is to reject the person as part of one’s life.

Many children are suffering the rejection of their parents in denying knowing them, when abandoned and alienated from them; denial in knowing the person is the abandonment of one’s relationship with the one he or she is denying. In the case of Peter, it was pure fear – the works of the devil in his life. God said, “If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all”! It is faith that assures us the equilibrium we need to stand firm. “But I have prayed for you that your faith will not fail”. The phrase, “that your faith will not fail” connects with the words of God to Isaiah, “If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all”. Faith is the rock we must stand on.

As committed Christians, we need increasingly to stand firm in our faith in God, who alone is certain and unchangeable. God existed before the universe was created, he will exist after the present heavens and earth are destroyed, he does not change, he is all-powerful and all-good, he is faithful, and he is far bigger than any difficulty or problem with which we may be confronted as an individual, as a nation or as a Church.

Psalm 46:1 declares, "God is our hope and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear". God sometimes takes us out of our trouble. More often He helps us get through it. He is with us when we walk through the valley of the shadow of death (Psalm 23:4). When we pass through the waters or the fire, God is

with us (Isaiah 43:2). "Do not be afraid, for I am with you" (Isaiah 43:5). In a world where everything else seems like quicksand, God is the solid bedrock.

If we are to trust in the Lord in this way, we need to know, beyond a shadow of doubt, who God is, and what our relationship to him is. We need to have a clear faith, and to stand firm in that faith. In a world which tells us that there is no absolute truth, no absolute morality, and no absolute good or evil, we need to be quite sure of what we believe and what we stand for. Let us stand firm as Anglicans to weather these challenges. *If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.* Amen.

Let us see what we have been able to do as a Diocese since the last synod

1: Equipping and Empowering our Church Agents to Deliver Excellence

Summit – The Diocese organized a one-day Orientation Summit for our PCC and Synod members at the Royal College of Surgeons on Saturday, 16th May 2015. This was to prepare the office holders to take up their responsibilities for the triennium with better understanding, focus and understanding.

- A one-day Orientation programme was organized for all priests on Healing and Deliverance Ministry. This was towards the preparation to decentralize the Pentecost Anointing and Healing Service.
- Sunday school teachers have been trained at the Diocesan Ministerial Training School to effectively handle/teach in our Sunday Schools after many years.
- 11 Chalice Assistants, 74 Lay Readers and 12 Discipleship have been trained at the Diocesan Ministerial Training School since the appointment of the new Ag. Director at our last Synod. A new School Board has been commissioned by the Bishop to handle the affairs of the Ministerial School.
- Various prayer warriors and evangelism workers have been trained on Healing and Deliverance Ministry at the Archdeaconry levels.
- We believe, motivation can come by remunerating the worker well, and we have taken steps in achieving this by adjusting upwards the salaries of the clergy over the period.

ORDINANDS IN TRAINING

St. Nicholar Seminary, Cape Coast – 13
Trinity Theological Seminary – 7

St. Nicholas Seminary, Cape Coast

✓ George Frederick Hansen-Owoo	-	1 st Year
✓ AkuaOfori-Boateng	-	1 st year
✓ Gideon NiiAttuquayeQuaye	-	2 nd year
✓ Ebenezer NiiOfoliBotchway	-	2 nd year
✓ Abraham Leo Lartey	-	2 nd year
✓ Samuel AbohCommey	-	2 nd year
✓ Dickson Yaw EtornamEbelin	-	3 rd year
✓ Julian Clarence SowahOkine	-	3 rd year
✓ Daniel BortequayeTeiman	-	3 rd year
✓ Isaac NiiKwantsiOtoo	-	3 rd year
✓ Vincent NiiAyiteyAnang	-	4 th year
✓ Ebenezer NamoaaleLaryea	-	4 th year
✓ Rev. Mary Magdalene Aburam	-	2 nd year

Trinity Theological Seminary

✓ Dr. William C. KwamenaSagoe	-	1 st Year
✓ Fred Osei Tutu	-	2 nd year
✓ Christian NiiAshong	-	2 nd year
✓ Ebenezer OkoKorlaiClottey	-	2 nd year
✓ Capt. EarlandLaryea	-	2 nd year
✓ Benjamin Ayitey-Okine	-	3 rd year
✓ Richmond NiiamarhKwei-Nsoro	-	3 rd year

ORDINATION**Priests:**

- ❖ Rev. Marian N.A. Addo
- ❖ Rev. Emma Ida Graham
- ❖ Rev. Fr. Ernest Tackie-Yarboi
- ❖ Rev. Esi Hilda Sey

Deacons

- ❖ Rev. Vincent Annan
- ❖ Rev. Benjamin Ayitey-Okine
- ❖ Rev. Justice TettehApo
- ❖ Rev. Stanley Mensah
- ❖ Rev. Joseph Kwaasi
- ❖ Rev. Emmanuel Quao
- ❖ Rev. Richmond AmarhKwei-Nsoro

CLERGY MOVEMENT:

- Very Rev. Seth J.A. Sackey – appointed Dean of Holy Trinity Cathedral, Accra
- Ven. (Maj.) Ebenezer NiiAddyLaryea – appointed Archdeacon of Accra East and Parish Priest of St. Barnabas
- Rev. Fr. Sam Wood – as Assistant Civilian Chaplain to St. George Garrison, Burma Camp
- Rev. Fr. Eric Mark Owusu – as Priest Assisting to St. Joseph, Kaneshie
- Rev. Fr. Roland AgbekoKpoanu – as Priest Assisting to Holy Trinity Cathedral, Accra
- Rev. Fr. Albert Cyril Akai-Nettey – as Priest Assisting to St. Michael & All Angels, Korle-Gonno
- Rev. Fr. Ernest GyimahAgyemang – as Priest-in-Charge of SS Peter & Paul, Kwabenya
- Rev. Fr. Ernest Tackie-Yarboi – as Priest Assisting to St. Barnabas, Osu
- Rev. Fr. Clement KoteiVanderpuye – as Priest-in-Charge of St. James, Anyaa
- Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Omani Clottey – as Priest Assisting to St. Mary, Accra
- Rev. Fr. Christopher Armah – as Priest-in-Charge of St. Mark, Ardayman and Anglican Church of Nativity, Onyansanaa
- Rev. Marian NaaAdukweiAddo – on Secondment to St. Nicholas Seminary, Cape Coast
- Rev. Emmanuel Obed N.O. Quao – as Deacon Assisting to St. Mary, Accra
- Rev. Justice TettehApo – as Deacon Assisting to St. George, Chorkor
- Rev. Joseph Kofi Kwaasi – Deacon Assisting to All Saints, Dodowa

Clergy On Retirement

By the grace of God, Rev. Fr. Nathaniel Okai, retired from active service on 11th February 2015 at the age of 70.

Institutional Appointment:

Rev. Canon Ebenezer Jones Okai – appointed Member of Governing Council of Kumasi Polytechnic

Congratulations:

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Rev. Canon Anthony MorkehchieEiwuley for graduating with an LL.B degree from GIMPA.

Publication:

Once again, I take the opportunity to congratulate the Rev. Canon Patrick OkaijahBortier for publishing a book on Leadership– *Keeping the Church on the Right Path: the Role of the Clergy and Laity*

2: DEEPENING SPIRITUALITY

Healing and Anointing Service

As you may have noticed, we have decentralized the Pentecost Healing and Anointing Service from the Diocesan Level to the Parish Level. This enables every member to participate in the Healing and Anointing Service. However, St. Luke-tide Anointing and Healing Service will be held at the Cathedral every year.

Revised Missal:

As part of our vision “to build ... for them to come”, the Diocesan Liturgical Committee has revised the Missal to make our worship life more vibrant, dynamic and contemporary. We recommend the use of the new Missal as a liturgical book for worship in the Diocese.

Bible Study:

Bible study is an essential tool and means of growth for the Christian. Anew Bible Study material has been produced to aid in equipping our members to live and express their faith within their communities through our bible studies and teachings.

In deepening our spirituality, we need to take our bible study serious as an individual, as well as a Church. With the production of the Bible Study materials we will like to bring to the consideration of Synod settingaside a day(s) during the week for serious Bible Studies, since bible study on Sundays has not been regular and effective.

Catechism:

The Diocese also has produced the Gã version of Aid to Catechism which areavailable at both the Diocesan office and the Anglican Bookshop, Accra.

Crusades:

The Deanery and the Archdeaconries are encouraged to organize at least one out-door gospel crusade each year.“Stand Firm in The Faith” in rebuilding our church numerically. The Holy Spirit is given to us for peculiar work. Acts 1: 8 says, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”.

The church has shied away from this Great Commission for far too long. We need pragmatic approach to fill our pews.

3: Growth Based on Integrity and Discipline

Church Planting:

- Rev. Fr. Cecil Williams with the support of the Evangelism Committee have planted a church at Gonsɛɛ-Gbawe, and we have named it **Resurrection Anglican Church**
- St John Anglican Church, Odorkor, Alabama City, through the guidance of Rev. Fr. Thomas Quarcoopome have also planted a church at Obom in the Gã District and named it **St. Boniface Anglican Church.**

We appreciate the good work done and it is our hope that this gesture will challenge other parishes and congregations to reach the unreached areas of the Diocese. We would also recommend the following:

1. All parishes must train follow-up teams to visit newly converted members.
2. Ushers must be well trained to receive people into the church with love and smiles.
3. Members must intensify invitation to friends, family member and neighbours to various church programmes and services.
4. Sermons must be lively, short and devoid of rancor and insinuations; but be filled with Theological truths.

Faithfully doing all these will bring more fire and, therefore, more people into the church and that will steadily and systematically fill our pews.

Creation of New Archdeaconry:

Accra as a city is expanding very fast and new settlements are being developed and established. As a church, we should be abreast with the development of the City of Accra to meet the spiritual needs of parishioners. The Evangelism Committee in collaboration with the Deanery and Archdeaconries should develop strategies to expand along the lines of the development of Accra. We have not yet strategized to move along these lines. However, there is need for us to be seen as being anchored to the Rock and yet geared to the time.

At the Standing Committee meeting held on Thursday, 25th June 2015 at the Bishopscourt, the Committee gave approval for the creation of a new

archdeaconry, to be known and called **Accra North-East Archdeaconry**, which will include the following parishes and congregations:

Parishes:

❖ St. Peter Anglican Church	-	Madina
❖ Christ Anglican Church	-	Legon
❖ SS Peter & Paul Anglican Church	-	Kwabenya
❖ Anglican Church of Transfiguration	-	Haatso
❖ Holy Family Anglican Church	-	Adenta
❖ St. Benedict Anglican Church	-	Ashongman
❖ St. Ambrose Anglican Church	-	Dome
❖ Ascension Anglican Church	-	Ashaley-Botwe
❖ St. Joseph Anglican Church	-	Agbogba
❖ All Saints Anglican Church	-	Dodowa
❖ University of Professional Studies	-	Legon

Congregations:

▪ Anglican Church of the Transfiguration	-	Oyibi
▪ St. James Anglican Church	-	Otinibi
▪ St. Philip Anglican Church	-	Kweiman
▪ St. Monica Anglican Church	-	Danfa
▪ St. James Anglican Church	-	Teiman(School only)

In this regard the Archdeaconries have been re-demarcated as in *Appendix 1*, attached.

Website:

We have re-designed our website to be very attractive and informative.

Role of Guilds/Associations In The Church:

The Church defines itself by mission: -proclaiming the word, making disciples of the people, and working on social, economic and political lives of the membership. To help achieve this, the clergy and laity have dual responsibilities. The laity in the Church forms about 99 per cent of church membership. The laity most often are grouped into guilds and associations.

One would, however, want to find out what role these guilds/associations perform in the church. Development projects in the Church are mostly funded through the activities of the Guilds and Associations. Notably, however, Guilds and Associations establish close connexion between religion and daily life. They offer Christian support: - taking care of widows and

orphans, helping the impoverished and sick members, and are involved in other benevolent activities.

It is true that most parishes are operating welfare schemes, but I urge that we turn our eye to the burgeoning senior population in our churches, the Clergy inclusive. The growing numbers call for urgent response. Considerable resources are needed to meet the challenges (dependency and care-giving) associated with old age, and the Church should intensify its existing structures to tackle this phenomenon. Current in our structures is the Children and Youth Ministry, Women's Ministry and Men's Ministry. Need there not be "*the Aged Ministry*", to formulate and promote ways of advancing aid and assistance to our aged folks?

Certain associations have evolved in teaching their members leadership skills, develop public speaking skills, and being involved in worship.

4: Financial Sustainability

One Bank Project—it is almost a year now since the commencement of the project. We encourage the Board of Finance to undertake the evaluation of the Project within the shortest possible time to see its impact on our finances. Financial regulations should be adhered to for development. The revised Financial Regulations has been published and I advise all PCC members to purchase a copy

5: Social Impact

- *Rafiki –Women's Ministry Project*

- ✓ Rafiki, a Non-Governmental Organization, an American Institution based in Adjenkotoku in the Gã West District of the Greater Accra Region have collaborated with the Women's Ministry of the Diocese to undertake the production of Tie & Dye, Batik and basket weaving, to be sold on the American market. By the grace of God, Rafiki have bought the first consignment and the second consignment is ready for collection. This project is aimed at empowering the women in the Diocese financially. Currently, out of the 30 women who came for the skill training in Batik, Tie & Dye and Basket weaving only 18 of them are now engaged on the project. We hope that the Women's Ministry will take this project seriously to empower more women in the Diocese in skill training.
- ✓ The Diocese is currently actively participating in the campaign against diseases like Cholera, Malaria and Ebola. The Diocese in collaboration with the Christian Council of Ghana and UNICEF has initiated activities in the fight against Ebola.

- ✓ On medical outreaches, the Diocese in collaboration with its partners, Ghanaian Mothers' HopeInc, Maryland, U.S.A., are building nurses quarters for our Clinic at Akramaman which is nearing completion.
- ✓ We are in the process of constructing a toilet facility and attaching it to our school at Nsakina. We are praying to start the operation of the school in Nsakina from September 2015.
- ✓ The Cathedral Church of the Most Holy Trinity will undertake expansion work at our Primary and Junior High School at Oduman. The school is in session though, but we are still expanding it by building more classrooms.
- ✓ In collaboration with Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA), some expansion works have been initiated within our schools at St. Justin, Ablekuma, St. Joseph, Kaneshie and St. Luke, Kwashieman.
- ✓ Work on the construction of the Pokuase Clinic is nearing completion, and it would be handed over to the community in October,2015. Currently, the District Health Authorities are using the place for ante-natal clinic.

INTERNAL PROVINCE OF GHANA

ANG.U.TECH

The Anglican University College of Technology (ANG.U.TECH) has since the inauguration and commissioning of its first campus at Nkoranza in October 2013 operated two academic years i.e. 2013/2015 and 2014/2015. Admissions are ongoing for the 2015/2016 academic year.

For the 2014/2015 academic year, the University received a total of 109 applications for the degree programmes. Admission was offered to 95 candidates. Out of this number a total of 50 students reported and registered for the programmes. This increased the total number of students to 52.

At the moment, the University offers full time programmes only. However, there are plans to introduce weekend sessions in all the accredited programmes. This will offer a window of opportunity for the working class to receive university education thereby increasing the numbers.

Currently, the University has one campus in Nkoranza. The prospects for growth of that campus are great since more attractive programmes are being added especially in health. Alternative approach to increasing enrolment is to establish the Kumasi and Accra campuses immediately to prove attractive, employable and entrepreneurially driven training for students. These additional campuses require urgent support from the Church to expedite implementation. Such support could be in the form of infrastructure where the University College could start from.

The programmes currently offered in ANG.U.TECH are B.Sc. General Agriculture, B.A. Development and Management Studies, B.Sc. Health Information Management and B.Sc. Community Medicine and Health (Physician Assistantship programme). The School of Food and Health Sciences is in the process of introducing new programmes including:

1. B.Sc. Health Informatics
2. B.Sc. General Nursing
3. Diploma in Midwifery, and
4. Certificate in Health Assistants (Clinical)

There are many challenges confronting the University, being a young institution, but the area the Church's support is most needed include:

1. Providing monetary support to expand the inadequate infrastructure at Nkoranza Campus and for establishing the two additional campuses.

We continue to extend our appeal to individuals and guilds and associations within the Church to also come to our aid in this regard.

ANGLICAN COMMUNION

BISHOPS IN DIALOGUE CONSULTATION

At the end of Lambeth 2008, some Bishops of South Africa, EastAfrica, Canada and United States of America came together to dialogue as to the best way forward for the Anglican Communion. Thus, *The Bishops in Dialogue Consultation* grew out of the recommendation of Lambeth 2008 and they believe their work is important in building a strong Communion towards the Lambeth 2018 (probably).

They are committed in sharing their learnings from these dialogues that will grow significantly with emerging agendas as a way to develop understanding, build trust, and foster reconciliation within the Anglican Communion.

At the Consultation, which took place in Richmond Retreat Centre, Richmond, Virginia, USA, it was agreed that the next Consultation will be held in Accra in the last week of May 2016.

In consultation with the Archbishop of the Internal Province of Ghana, I accepted the challenge to host the Bishops in Dialogue Consultation in May 2016. We shall need your support when preparations towards this all important consultation commences.

NEW PRESIDING BISHOP – TEC

The Episcopal Church (TEC) on Saturday, 27th June 2015 elected its first African American presiding bishop, Rt. Rev. Michael Curry of North Carolina. He will succeed Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, who was the first female presiding bishop and the first woman to lead an Anglican national church.

At a news conference, Curry said his selection as the first black leader of the denomination was “a sign of our church growing more deeply in the spirit of God and in the movement of God’s spirit in our world”. He will be installed on 1st November 2015 in a service at the Washington National Cathedral, the day Jefferts Schori completes her nine-year term.

NATIONAL ISSUES

GOVERNANCE AND ITS IMPACT ON THE LIFE OF THE CITIZENRY

Governance can be either good or bad. Good governance brings about development to the people, improving the life of the citizenry and helping to reduce poverty. On the other hand bad governance impacts negatively on the poor, worsening their living conditions. Good governance shows forth in democratization, justice and the rule of law, eradication of corruption, decentralization, eliminating bureaucratic tendencies, public administration reforms and public financial management.

Ghana for the past few years has practiced democratic governance, and I can attest that the citizenry are the better for it, enjoying good life. The current erratic power supply, high cost of petroleum products and its attendant hardships, notwithstanding, Ghana can take pride in its peaceful life, tribal, ethnic, and religious tolerance. In this vein, I would urge that more is done to stabilize the erratic power supply, to keep companies and establishments in business.

THE CHURCH AND EDUCATION

Education in Ghana can be traced back to the missionaries who, in addition to setting up the churches, taught it wise to set up schools. It is therefore no secret that in time past missionary schools are held in high esteem. The Anglican Church can truly be said to have made a mark in the educational strides of the country. Come to talk of discipline in the schools, and the Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, and Presbyterian schools come top.

Discipline in our schools has now fallen drastically, and we can no longer boast and strike our chest for proper upbringing of our kids. Gone are the days when a child in a bus or trotro gets up and offers his/her seat when an elderly person comes on the bus. Attendant with this is the fallen standards in our education. Should the situation be blamed on the teachers or the students? Nay, the Good Book says in Prov. 13: 24 “whoever spares the rod hates their children ...” Yes, with advancement in technology and communication we expect our children to soar higher, but the opposite is the case. The teachers complain of facilities and teaching aids. In the extreme is the lack of Anglican teachers – most of the teachers in the Anglican education unit are just posted by the Ghana Education Service, not caring about their religious inclinations. Parishes and congregations should endeavor to sponsor teacher trainees, who in turn would come back to teach our children so that we turn round the clock in our education.

PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE IN DIVERSITY:

Inter-Faith Relationships

The world has become a global village with the aid of advanced technology; hence it is inevitable that people of different nationality, race or religion cannot escape living and working together. Can we love and tolerate each other even though we are different and diverse? Jesus exhorts us to love our neighbours as ourselves and, even, to love our enemies and those who hate us (Matt. 6: 35).

In Ghana, we have experienced peaceful co-existence. In the Monday, April 13, 2015 edition of the Daily Graphic there was an article headed, “Mission schools and religious tolerance”. The writer had this to say, **“When you visit Bishop Herman College in Kpando, a veritable stronghold of Catholicism in Ghana ask to be shown where Muslim students congregate for their “salat” prayers every day. You will be directed to a quiet and convenient spot close to the school refectory. This has been the normal practice and tradition in this famous Catholic School for many decades. From the look of things, this peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims in the school is unlikely to be disturbed for many years to come. This is how it is and this is how it will be.”**

May I ask what has changed in our Ghanaian society in relation to religious tolerance? In a way that the two dominant religions in this country, Christianity and Muslims are beginning to be intolerant with each other. Let us continue to live in peace with each other irrespective of our religious, tribal or ethnic differences.

PUBLIC FINANCES IN GHANA

In recent years the Auditor-General's reports on performance within the public sector of the Ghanaian economy has revealed poor records in public financial management, thus raising doubts about the government's ability to effectively and efficiently use revenue for their intended purposes stated in the budget.

The lack of accountability in public sector financial management undermines public trust and this is a pressing issue. Ghanaians have pinned their hopes on the expected oil revenues as a bridge to improved standards of living. Yet, the evidence of the effects of the current oversight framework remains a real threat to dashing these hopes. It is thus time for our political leaders to seize the initiative and implement reforms to improve public financial management.

Now to Him that is able to do exceedingly more than we ask or deserve, to Him be glory, dominion, and power now and forever more. Amen.