

Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion)

ADOW

Anglican Diocese of the West

**The Right Reverend Dr. Felix C. Orji
Diocesan Bishop**



November 2021

**An Introduction to the
Anglican Diocese of the West (ADOW)**

Leadership

His Grace, the Most Reverend Henry Ndukuba
Metropolitan, Archbishop and Primate of All Nigeria



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Description of the Diocese</i>	5
<i>Statistics</i>	6
<i>Mission Statement</i>	7
<i>Core Values</i>	7
<i>What We Believe and Who We Are</i>	8

Anglican Diocese of the West
Introduction
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Introduction:

The Anglican Diocese of the West (ADOTW) began as the Western District of the Convocation of Anglicans in North America (CANA) in 2011 during the leadership of The Right Reverend Martyn Minns, then Missionary Bishop of the Convocation of Anglicans in North America. As the district grew, the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in collaboration with the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA) decided to constitute it as a diocese. It became the Diocese of CANA West in 2013 with The Right Reverend Dr. Felix C. Orji as its first and current Bishop.

The Rt. Reverend Dr. Felix C. Orji was elected Bishop in March 2011 by the House of Bishops of the Church of Nigeria and appointed Bishop of the area of CANA West later that same year. In June 2011, Dr. Orji was received into the Anglican Church in North America's House of Bishops. On September 25, 2011, he was consecrated in the Church of Nigeria in Lagos, Nigeria.

Description:

The Anglican Diocese of the West is a diocese of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). The Bishop is seated in the House of Bishops of the Church of Nigeria and both he and the clergy are clergy of the Church of Nigeria. The current Bishop is also the coordinating Bishop of the Church of Nigeria North American Mission (CONNAM). CONNAM consists of three dioceses; The Anglican Diocese of the West (ADOTW), Anglican Diocese of the Trinity (ADOTT), and the Jurisdiction of the Armed Forces and Chaplaincy (JAFC).

Geographically and culturally the diocese is diverse with parishes located in the United States, Canada and the Persian Gulf. The Cathedral parish of Holy Trinity is located in Houston, Texas with a metropolitan area of over 7,000,000. The original Cathedral (St. Francis) is located in El Paso, Texas. El Paso is a metropolitan area with more than 800,000 people bordering the country of Mexico and the State of New Mexico (US) and home to one of the largest military bases in the United States. It remains designated as a cathedral to honor its historic role in the formation of the diocese.

Parishes were originally located in sixteen (16) US states: California, Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Maine, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas, Tennessee, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming. The largest concentration of parishes is within the State of Texas (second most populous state with more than 25,000,000 people spread out over 268,000 square miles or 696,000 square kilometers). Parishes were located in the Canadian provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, and British Columbia as well as the Persian Gulf. In addition, the Anglican Diocese of the West has facilitated the formation of postulants for the military chaplaincy who live within ADOW under the direction of the Bishop for the Diocese of the Armed Forces and

Anglican Diocese of the West

Chaplaincy.

Effective September 23, 2021, the Church of Nigeria Standing Committee passed a Diocesan Restructuring Resolution. All CONNAM churches belonging to either ADOTT or ADOTW were assigned according to the approved geographical realignment. The Anglican Diocese of the West encompasses the following US states: Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, Florida, Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Utah, Colorado, Kansas, Nevada, Alaska, Hawaii, Montana, Idaho, Washington, Wyoming, Oregon, and California. In Canada ADOTW consists of the following Provinces and Territories: Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, British Columbia, and Alberta. ADOTW retains the parishes in the Persian Gulf.

The Anglican Diocese of the West is also the home of the Society of Saint Benedict, a growing religious society authorized by the diocese with the diocesan Bishop as Protector/Episcopal Visitor for the order.

Statistics:

Bishop: 1
Suffragan Bishops: 2
Executive Archdeacon: 1
Canon to the Ordinary: 1
Regional Archdeacons: 9
Chancellor: 2
Religious Order: 1
Standing Committee
Clergy: 90
Parishes: 50+
Diocesan Knights of St. Christopher
Mother's Union
Women's Guild

Mission Statement:

"We are a fellowship of Christian believers whose mission is to make disciples of Christ by preaching the Biblical gospel of grace, teaching God's Word faithfully to believers, and SUPPORTING one another in this mission and ministry of the Church to the glory of God alone."

Core Values:

TRINITARIAN – focused on our Triune God, relying on Him, and walking in wholehearted devotion to Him. Knowing Him, delighting in Him, and enjoying Him forever. Exalting and proclaiming Him. And relying on the Holy Spirit for Christian life and ministry.

CHRIST CENTERED - Christians are accounted righteous before God only by the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, perfect God and perfect Man, by faith and not by any works or deservings. We believe in grounding our work in those formational historical events of the incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Christ.

***BIBLICAL**

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the inspired Word of God and our primary authority for faith and morals. We are Bible-Driven hence committed to expounding the Bible, with Biblical delight, wholeheartedly walking in the way of God's Word, preaching it to ourselves and to others. Desiring to do everything in Biblical ways and with Biblical means.

HISTORIC ANGLICANISM

We trace our identity to the 16th century English Reformation that valued the Apostolic faith, expressed in Holy Scripture, summarized in the Creeds, celebrated in the dominical Sacraments, and preserved by the traditional Anglican formularies.

MISSIONARY

We will equip Anglican Christians to live as beacons of hope and light in their workplaces, neighborhoods and families, and plant new churches, with a special focus on extending the love of God to growing ethnic populations. We are Gospel-Motivated eager to organize our life and ministry around Jesus' mission. Proclaiming the objective biblical gospel of Jesus Christ to non-Christians for their conversion, and proclaiming the objective biblical gospel of Jesus Christ to Christians for their growth. Making disciple-making disciples of Jesus.

LOCAL CONGREGATIONS - The primary place where the Christian life is lived and shared is the local congregation. The local congregation must be committed to the Great Commission and the Great Commandment. The function of the diocese, therefore, is to give direction, support and encouragement to local congregations, discern new opportunities for churches, and to ensure that God's Word is faithfully preached, practiced, and taught.

GENEROUS - In our commitment to strengthen our Christian witness, our Anglican identity, our episcopal bonds, and our presence in the world, each parishioner and each congregation is encouraged to give generously, joyfully, sacrificially, with the understanding that all we have is a gift from God. Each Congregation is encouraged to join in the cheerful giving of 10% to support the diocese and bishop, and 10% to outreach and missions.

What We Believe and Who We Are:

We believe in...

(ref. *Romans 1:16-17; 3:21-26* and *2 Corinthians 5:21*)

God's due Reverence - Who He is and what He has done.

- There is only One True God, eternally existing in three equally Divine Persons (the Trinity): the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, worthy to receive all praise, glory and adoration.
- The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as the Godhead, share a divinely perfect will and complete sovereignty over creation, revelation, redemption, and final judgment.
- God is Creator, Redeemer, and Judge. He is eternal, perfect, and triune. He is transcendent, infinite, immanent, immutable, omnipresent, omnipotent, and omniscient.
- God is sovereign over all things, and He redeems a people for Himself (His People) to the praise of His glorious grace. (*God Saves Sinners*).

God's Revelation – God reveals Himself generally as a just Creator within creation and within the human conscience. God also progressively reveals Himself especially throughout redemptive-history as recorded in Holy Scriptures culminating in His full and definitive Self-revelation in the gospel of Jesus' Person and Work.

- God is a speaking-God Who has inspired the words preserved in Holy Scripture, which contains the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments. There is a Biblical-theological continuity between the Old and New Testaments, which unify the Bible as one witness to one organic revelation of God for salvation throughout redemptive-history.
- Holy Scripture, the Bible, is Divinely inspired, inerrant, and infallible as originally given (in the original writings). The Bible is the verbally inspired Word of God, and it is without error.

- The Bible is utterly authoritative in all matters of faith and conduct, and it contains all things necessary for salvation and godly living. The Bible is totally sufficient for all that God requires us to believe and do. It is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

God's Declaration of Humanity's *Ruin* - Adam, made in the image of God, distorted that image and forfeited his original blessedness, for himself and all his progeny, by falling into sin through Satan's temptation.

- Humanity is guilty before God and is universally sinful in nature (originally and actually) since the Fall; rendering man subject to God's wrath and condemnation.
- As a result of Adam's fall into sin, all human beings are alienated from God, corrupt in every aspect of their being, hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, and condemned finally and irrevocably to death, apart from God's Own gracious intervention.
- On his own, man is helpless and unable to save himself. Man stands in supreme need of being rescued from God's wrath and reconciled to Him, and his only hope is the undeserved love, grace, and mercy of God, Who, alone, can rescue us and restore us to Himself.

God's Gracious *Rescue* – The gospel or, Good News, of the Person and Work of Jesus Christ.

- God determined from all eternity to save many sinners in grace, and, to this end, He foreknew, predestined, and chose them.
- Jesus is the eternal Word of God Who became flesh. He is fully God and fully man, yet without sin, in one Person with two natures, the God-Man. The Lord Jesus Christ is the incarnate Son of God, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. Jesus suffered and died an atoning death on the cross; His body rose physically from the dead; and He presently reigns in heaven and on earth.
- Jesus is the only One in and through Whom sinners are justified by faith alone and saved by God's free sovereign grace alone. Salvation comes to us by grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone, as revealed in the Bible alone, to the glory of God alone.
- Jesus Christ acted as our representative and substitute. He is the only Mediator between God and man, and redemption from the guilt, penalty, and power of sin is only through His sacrificial and substitutionary death once-and-for-all time.
- On the cross, Jesus Christ canceled sin, propitiated God, and, by bearing the full penalty of our sins, reconciled to God all those who believe (Substitutionary Penal Atonement).
- Justification is an act of God's undeserved mercy in which the sinner is forgiven all their sins and accepted as righteous in God's sight; because, the righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed to sinners who receive it by grace alone through faith alone on the merits of Jesus Christ alone. Christ Jesus, by His obedience and death, fully discharged the debt of all those who are justified, so that hell-deserving sinners, chosen by God's sovereign election, are forgiven, accepted, and saved, through faith in Jesus Christ, the crucified and risen sin-bearer.

- Jesus Christ lived the perfect life in the place of His people and died the death they deserved to die in their place. We are more wicked than we ever realized, but more loved that we ever dreamed.
- Zeal and desire to walk wholeheartedly in the way of God's Word in obedience to Him flows from this free justification and acceptance. It is because we are accepted in Jesus Christ already we obey His Word by the grace of God. Genuine faith reveals itself in repentance and good works as its new lifestyle, so good works are the indispensable evidence of saving faith in Jesus Christ.
- The gospel of grace is not proclaimed if Jesus Christ's perfect sinless life, His substitutionary atoning death on the cross, His physical bodily resurrection, His ascension, and His imminent return are not central to that proclamation.

God's Enabled Human *Response* – It is the gracious enabling of the Holy Spirit behind all that is involved in repentance and faith, love and joy, delight and happiness, understanding and obedience.

- The Holy Spirit applies this great salvation, attested to in the whole Bible and secured by Jesus Christ, to His people. The Holy Spirit makes the work of Jesus Christ effective to the individual sinner, applying it to His people by regenerating them and giving them repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as a gift of His grace.
- The Holy Spirit indwells all those who are regenerated, and He is the down payment of the promised inheritance Who guides, instructs, equips, revives, and empowers believers; producing in them an increasing likeness to Christ in character and behavior, and Who enables them for their witness in the world. He gives us a desire and love for the Bible, the ability to understand and obey the Bible, and the power to live on mission, talking to people about Jesus.
- The only holy universal Church is the Body of Christ to which all true believers belong. The universal church is manifest in local churches of which Jesus Christ is the Head.
- Those saved by the grace of God enter the Kingdom of God and delight in all of the blessings of the New Covenant. The New Covenant People of God have already come to the heavenly Jerusalem. Genuine believers are already seated with Christ in the heavenlies and are positionally at their closest point with God (The "now and not-yet" of the Kingdom of God).
- As God's new people, or new society, the Church, we want to make disciple-making disciples of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, by the power of the Holy Spirit and for the glory of our Heavenly Father, builds up a community of believers to live and worship under the authority of Scripture.
- Jesus Christ ordained two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which are outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual reality, received only by faith. Baptism is connected with entrance into the new covenant community, and the Lord's Supper is connected with ongoing covenant renewal. These sacraments are visible expressions of membership in the Church of those who believe in and receive the Word, and they serve as assurances and pledges of the fulfillment of the promises of God's Word.

- In the imminent future, there will be a personal, glorious, and bodily return of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and He will exercise His role as Judge of all men. Jesus will execute God's just condemnation on the impenitent to judgment and eternal conscious punishment in hell (those who reject Jesus) and receive the redeemed to eternal glory and blessedness in His presence in heaven (those who receive Jesus), and His Kingdom will be consummated.

We are...

(ref. *John 13:34-35* and *Matthews 28:19-20*)

Jesus-Centered – all about our Lord Jesus, and we want to do what He wants us to be doing, which is making and being His followers. As God-Centered, Bible-Driven, Gospel-Motivated followers of Jesus, it is our desire to faithfully and effectively proclaim the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to the world and build up God's people in the Biblical gospel as they live out an intimate and vital relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ by His grace and for His glory.

- Members are those marked by baptism who prove to be regenerated/converted believers of the gospel and disciples of Jesus Christ. All those gifted and empowered by the Holy Spirit are the real ministers, and every Christian believer has the privilege and responsibility to teach others about God.
- Every member of the congregation will be driven out into the world to serve God in whatever He calls them to do, and we limit the number of activities the local church organizes so that Members do not have their lives so full of 'church' activities that they do not have time or energy to be effective servants of the gospel in the world.
- The Church is where the Word of God is rightly handled, the sacraments duly administered, and discipline rightly applied. In order to glorify and honor God, to promote the health of the church, to be a godly and faithful witness to the world, and to restore people, we exercise church discipline in the four stages outlined in ***Matthew 18***.
- We are focused, sacrificial, and generous; realizing that church exists for the sake of others, so living in self-sacrifice and generosity is a hallmark of a healthy church. Nevertheless, the ultimate ministry of the Church is, first and foremost, the teaching and proclaiming of the Gospel of our Lord, God and Savior Jesus Christ.

Biblical and Prayerful – obeying the Bible in all that we believe and do with absolute dependence upon God and His grace.

- The Word of God does the work of God through the Spirit of God in the People of God, so, in large group, small group, and one-to-one interactions, we want to teach the Bible.
- The Word preached leads the church forward; therefore, we are committed to expository preaching and proclaiming the gospel by prayerfully expounding the Bible to the people God has given us. To this end, the best part of the preacher's day should be spent studying the Bible for himself at his desk so that he is preaching the passage to himself first and then to others. Within the framework of Biblical

Theology, the congregation should be led through consecutive Bible passages week by week.

- At the heart of ministry is the importance of prayer, both personally in daily communion with God through Bible study and prayer, and corporately at the Church Prayer Meeting and the Sunday Assembly. Prayer, talking to God, is how we engage with the Word of God and how the Word of God engages with us. Therefore, we are prayerful and realize we cannot do anything worthwhile apart from Him.
- The local church is the primary point at which the Kingdom of God impacts the kingdom of this world; therefore, we are committed to the local church. This means ignoring many of the things the world expects us to do in order to do what God calls us to do, in His grace and for His glory. This entails neglecting other good and worthy things in order to do the most important things the best that we can.
- The whole life of the Christian believer is worship, and our weekly assemblies have a two-fold purpose: evangelism (reaching unbelievers with the Biblical gospel) and edification (building believers up in the Biblical gospel). Both of these happen when the Bible is taught, so we read the Bible, preach the Bible, pray the Bible, sing the Bible, and obey the Bible. We are committed to the work of preaching and teaching the Bible; because, this, alone, will equip the saints for the work of ministry.
- We follow the Biblical teaching of complementarianism; that God created men and women in His image, equal but with different roles. These roles delineate male self-denying headship and leadership and female humble serving submission in the home and in the church. Nevertheless, men and women are all involved in gospel ministry, rejoicing in their complementary relationships, and doing everything in role-appropriate ways. We do not ordain women but only qualified and recognized men. God created human beings, male and female, in His own image, and they complement each other in mutually enriching ways with distinctive roles. Such equality in essence with distinct and complementary roles for man and woman is further revealed in the Self-sacrificial and subordinating condescension of the eternal Son and Word of God to His Father to accomplish His perfect will out of love in His incarnation and death. To be faithful stewards and to subdue God's creation according to our vocation, revering and honoring God involves living in a manner decreed by God as His creatures for His glory and our joy and satisfaction.

Reformational Anglicans – standing in the tradition of the Reformers, unashamed to follow the paths of Biblical Reformed doctrine.

- As Christian Believers in the Anglican tradition borne out of the Reformation, we stand in the tradition of the Anglican Reformers of the 16th Century affirming, with them, the great truths which were rediscovered at the time of the Reformation, such as the sovereignty of God in salvation, justification by faith alone, and salvation in Christ alone.
- We rejoice in the doctrines of grace. All Christians from any denomination are warmly welcome. We unite in Christ and not under any one denominational banner. We are unashamed to be committed to the paths of Biblical Christian

Reformed/evangelical doctrine. Within Reformational Anglicanism, we affirm the Biblical revelation of God, our fallen human condition, our need for God to save us from this position, that Jesus Christ is Lord, and that He, alone, is the Way, the Truth and the Life; that no-one comes to the Father except through Him.

- We are always reforming in light of Scripture, which is the Word of God and which contains all things necessary for salvation and godly living. We subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion as containing the true doctrine of the Church in agreement with God's Word which, in summary form, guard the gospel message about God, man, sin, grace, salvation, repentance and faith, the Church, and the Sacraments.
- We uphold the orthodox Christian creeds (Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian) and *The Book of Common Prayer* as set forth by the Church of England in 1662 with the attached *Ordinal* and accompanying *Homilies*.
- We are Reformed/evangelical, which means that we are committed to God's Word. What we believe and teach is governed by our understanding of the Bible. What God says in Scripture shapes our church life, sets our agenda and drives our priorities. Therefore, we aim to help everyone understand what the Bible says.

Evangelistic in our Mission and Ministry – organizing our life and ministry around Jesus' mission in obedience to His Word.

- We are Christians by conversion, and we want to preach the gospel to non-Christians for their conversion. We also want to preach the gospel to Christians for their growth, so they are built up and disciplined in God's Word.
- We give ourselves to the utmost importance and priority of being involved in Jesus' mission – being on mission with Jesus – proclaiming His gospel. We are outward looking, and we want to invite others to know Jesus.
- We want to proclaim the objective Biblical gospel and build our lives and ministry around this mission. In the grace of God, we want to make disciple-making disciples of Jesus who love Him, His Word, and one another; who live wholeheartedly in the way of His Word; who talk to others about Him and are a joyful witness in the world; and who live lives of servant-hood and sacrifice for the sake of the gospel and the glory of God.
- Jesus says, “*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you.*” As followers of Jesus, this involves the proclamation and continual teaching of the gospel, or Good News, of Jesus' Person and Work for our eternal salvation. This calls for the faithful ministry of God's Word and a prayerful dependence upon God. Therefore, ...

...we are a fellowship of Christian believers whose mission is to make disciples of Christ by preaching the Biblical gospel of grace, teaching God's Word faithfully to believers, and supporting each other in this mission and ministry for the Church to the glory of God alone