

# CONGREGATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT PROVINCE OF NIGERIA NORTH-EAST

# **Provincial Newsletter**

October, 2025

## **Editor's Tablet**

Dear Confreres,

As we grip the month of October, we find ourselves immersed in the exquisite beauty and profound richness that this season bestows upon us. This time of the year serves as a reminder of the Spiritan fraternity that unites us in our collective mission, particularly within the context of our postcentenary journey. October, also a month dedicated to the Holy Rosary, accentuates the assurance that we are never alone on our journey - as the Blessed Mother Mary under whose patronage we are specially dedicated keeps interceding for us, whether as individual confreres or as a cohesive Province. It instills in us a robust courage that propels us forward in our shared commitment.

### In this Issue:

In this edition of our Provincial Newsletter, we are pleased to present to you an array of engaging topics and significant events that embody the vivacity of our dear Province

- 1. Editorial
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- 4. Reunion of our scholastics
- 5. Superior's visit to North-America
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- 8. The encouraging strides made by our Spiritan Nursery/Primary School in NorthBank, Makurdi
- 9. PLT Decisions New placements and transfers
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We cordially invite you to engage with the stories of our shared efforts and commitments, knowing that each step we take together is underpinned by the joy and happiness of our Spiritan fraternity. And as we immerse ourselves in these stories and events, let us continue to labour earnestly in the united vision of building the Province of our dreams—a Province marked by collaboration, self-reliance, and unwavering dedication to our Spiritan mission.

Hand in hand, heart to heart, we can do it. Happy digest!

Fr Kenneth Oori, C.S.Sp.

## WHERE TRUE LOVE IS DWELLING, GOD IS DWELLING THERE

My dear confreres,

I greet you with the peace of Christ and the grace of the Holy Spirit, which binds us together in our shared vocation. The title above, "Where true love is dwelling, God is dwelling there," is more than a beautiful hymn lyric; it is the very heart of our Spiritan Charism and a profound call to action for our Province today.

Our Spiritan Mandate: A Unity of Hearts

In a world increasingly fractured by division, we are called to be apostles of peace and reconciliation. How can we credibly fulfill this mission globally if we fail to live it out daily within the realities of the mission spaces where we are called to witness? Our strength has always come from the communal nature of our life and ministry; a diverse group comprising several languages, nationalities and cultures and united by the Spirit of the Founders, Claude Poullart Des Places and Francis Mary-Paul Libermann.

Because of the divergences from our backgrounds, nurture and temperaments, we come with a wealth of different experiences to the table. This diversity is our gift, not our liability. However, when we allow these differences to create isolation or, worse, generate tension, we undermine the very core of our commitment to Christ and to one another.

When unity falters, our mission suffers. Division among confreres manifests in subtle, yet damaging, ways:



Ortese Jude Ortese, CSSp Provincial Superior

First of all, there is the Parochialism which focuses solely on one's own personal achievement in his ministry, leading to a neglect of the broader needs and goals of the Congregation and the Province. Our mission today should go beyond the mention of individual Spiritans and their achievements as was the case with our forebears. We are not a collection of independent ministries; we are a single body working for the mission of Christ.

Secondly, there is the Loss of Mutual Solidarity: Priesthood and consecrated life, especially in today's demanding world, requires profound fraternity. It is becoming a sad development that brothers become too busy to even extend a message of felicitations or even condolences when they are published on the Provincial WhatsApp page. Even some members of zonal communities

find it difficult to reach out next door for visit not to talk of community meals. The fact is that, when we are disconnected, we lose the v i t a l c o u n s e l, encouragement and support that is necessary to sustain us, leading to burnout and spiritual weariness. This is why the Psalmist says that, God dwells where there is true love.

Furthermore, our disunity leads to weakened witnessing: The people we serve notice when unity is lacking. The Christian faithful is divided, the members of the Vocations Support, our extended family develop cracks among themselves. The

obvious consequences are on the quality of witnessing. Our communal witness, our shared life, our mutual respect, like I mentioned during the homily for final profession in the month of August, are a powerful element of our evangelical poverty. When that witness is compromised, our effectiveness in mission is diminished.

How to Build a Home for True Love

To ensure that God is truly dwelling among us, we must be intentional about cultivating a profound and practical charity. I urge every confrere to reflect on these simple, yet essential steps: Seek out the Brother, Not the Fault: Let us practice the charity of interpreting a brother's actions in the most favorable and charitable light. When you disagree with a confrere or feel hurt, resolve to speak with him,

not about him to others. We are called to correct with compassion, not to criticize with condemnation.

Embrace the Spirit of the Common Fund: The Spirit of the Common Fund is not just about giving money to the Province, it is more about sharing hearts, burdens, and resources. Are you freely offering your particular talents, whether in administration, spirituality, or practical support, for the good of the entire Province? True love is generous and outward-looking.

Prioritize Community Life: Even in the most demanding assignments, make time for shared prayer, meals, and honest, recreational conversation. A healthy community is the engine of a healthy ministry. When we pray together and break bread together, our bond is renewed and strengthened in the Lord.

My dear brothers, the call to unity is the call to holiness. Let us make our Spiritan Province of Nigeria North-East a true sign of the Kingdom, a place where true love is dwelling, so that the world may see Christ in our harmony, and know that God is dwelling there indeed.

May the Holy Spirit, the source of our unity, guide and sustain us all. In the bond of the Holy Spirit,

Ortese Jude Ortese, CSSp Father Superior

## 2025 FINAL PROFESSION AND PROVINCIAL DIACONATE/PRIESTLY ORDINATIONS

his year, our Province witnessed a great harvest in the final profession of five confreres and their ordination to the diaconate, and the priestly ordination of three confreres.

Having completed their Spiritan Month, the confreres for final vows: Amase Peter CSSp, Atih Emmanuel CSSp, Awunah Armstrong CSSp, Shawon Jacob CSSp, and Umele Jospeh CSSp, joined the deacons at the Pastoral Centre, Makurdi, for a few days retreat, all in preparation for their final commitment in the Congregation. The ceremony of the Perpetual Profession of vows took place on the 7<sup>th</sup> of August, 2025, at St Michael's Parish, Yagba, North-Bank Makurdi. The Provincial Superior, Very Revd Fr Ortese Jude Ortese, CSSp presided over the liturgy, in the company of many confreres priests and scholastics, and the faithful who came from far and near to witness the zenith of religious consecration.

In his homily, the Provincial Superior, thanked the confreres for their gift of self-donation. He thanked their formators who have accompanied them at the various stages, from the postulancy to this point, and thanked their

respective families for their continuous support. emphasized that their commitment and dedication in the religious life is a life of total self-giving. This he said, must mirror Christ's total selfemptying (kenosis) and the sacrifices of our Spiritan forebears who have laboured so assiduously in building the Congregation in general and our dear Province in particular. He added that this fruitful harvest of additional five finally professed confreres is not only to boost the numeric strength of the province but also to contribute their talents and gifts for the up building of the Province.

The following day, 9<sup>th</sup> of August, 2025, witnessed the ordinations to the diaconate and presbyterate of the five finally professed confreres and three deacons confreres; Revd Iorjaan Jacob CSSp, Revd Uku Peter CSSp, and Revd Oori Kenneth CSSp.

The Holy Mass, which began few minutes after 10, was presided over by the Catholic Bishop of Kafanchan Diocese, Most Revd Dr Julius Yakubu Kundi. The superior of the Holy Ghost Congregation of the Province of Nigeria North-East and the Superior of the Castello

Missionaries, whose candidates were being ordained, directly flanked the bishop, in the company of many other deacons and priests who were readily available to welcome those to be ordained to the Sacred Orders.

In his homily, the ordaining prelate, reflected on the office of the deacon as a call to service – diakonia. He reechoed Pope Francis' "Smell like the Sheep" and added that by serving others

After the Rite of Ordinations, and the liturgy of the Holy Eucharist that followed, the newly ordained, together with their families, friends and wellwishers, in joyful and colourful tone of dance and jubilation, offered thanksgiving of praises and material items to God for the grace and privilege of ordination.

After the Holy Mass, the newly ordained held their respective receptions in their various tents,



we can empathize with their condition. The bishop also placed accent on the three-fold functions of the priest; to govern, to teach, and to sanctify. "In discharging these functions, you are to put on the model of Christ, in obedience and humility to the Church through your competent superiors". The Church is happy to welcome this increase, and I am happy to ordain and receive you to the Sacred Orders, be vanguards of the Church and your respective religious congregations, he added.

with the faithful who have come to share in their joy, after which their departed to their venues for the First Thanksgiving Masses.

# 2025 STUDENTS' REUNION

s customary, scholastics of the NNEP meet annually in the month of September in the Provincial House before the beginning of the academic session. This reunion helps them fraternize among themselves and deepen their bond as members of one family. To make it beneficial in a holistic way, different activities are featured, ranging from talks from priests confreres, and interactive session among themselves. This year's reunion began with Holy Mass at 10:15am in the Holy Spirit Chapel by the Vicar Provincial Very Rev. Fr. John Vershima C.S.Sp., concelebrated by the Provincial Bursar, Rev. Fr. Gabriel Akumba C.S.Sp.

After the Holy Mass, the second phase of the reunion began with the introduction of all those present, after which the Vicar Provincial officially welcomed the scholastics and informed them of the Provincial's unavoidable absent. He began his speech with this famous quote "Why has thou come and why are you here?" His speech centred around four basic areas; Resumption period, Commitment

to Seminary training, Sincerity and openness during the period of formation, and being in touch or connected with community life. He advised them to make the best of their time while in formation and arm themselves adequately for the mission of the Congregation.

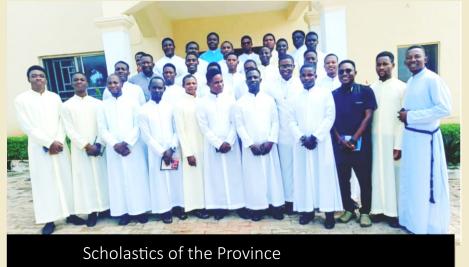
After the Vicar's speech, Fr. Iorjan Jacob, CSSp presented a paper titled "The Vow of Poverty

destitution, but about freely offering resources for communal growth and mission, modeled on Christ's self-emptying (2 Cor. 8:9). He talked about the challenge of self-reliance in the Province and underscored the efforts the PLT is making in that regard. He admitted that building a self-reliant province is a collective task and exhorted the scholastic to play their part appropriately. "Scholastics are

be faithful in giving accounts as it prepares them for future financial assignments and accountability.

In his closing remarks, Fr Akumba CSSp thanked the scholastics for their presence and active participation in the reunion. He appreciated the efforts the scholastics are making in their own capacity for the growth of the province and encouraged them to maintain the tempo. He prayed for journey mercies and for a blissful academic session as they returned to school.

The reunion came to a close with a prayer led by Rev. Umele Joseph C.S.Sp. at 2:20pm, after which the scholastics had their lunch.



According to SRL 65, and the Challenge of Self-Reliance for Northeast Province: The Role of Scholastics"

He highlighted key features of the vow of poverty (detachment, simplicity, common ownership of properties), tracing its root to the Scripture (Mt 19:21; Lk 12:33; Acts 2:44–45). He buttressed this with SRL 65 and Canon 668.3 that stipulate that all gifts, salaries, pensions, stipends, and benefits we receive belong to the Congregation. He emphasized that Poverty is not about

uniquely positioned as future leaders to drive communal growth, unity, and sustainable self-reliance in the Northeast Province". Questions were asked on the vow of poverty and financial management, Fr. Iorjaan Jacob and the Provincial Bursar answered and clarified them.

On his part, the Provincial Bursar addressed the scholastics to intimate them on their financial obligations, especially the giving of apostolic work and holidays returns. He admonished them to

## SUPERIORS CANONICAL VISIT TO NORTH-AMERICA

s part of his obligations of paying canonical visitations to confreres both on mission ad extra and ad intra, the Provincial Superior, Very Revd Fr Ortese Jude Ortese, CSSp visited the confreres in North-America between 15<sup>th</sup> October to 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2025. This canonical visitation served as a crucial occasion that fostered stronger ties between the Superior, the confreres, the various dioceses were they are working, and the US Spiritan "Province.

Superior with Fr Okih Francis and the Parish Priest of Salem

The Superior was warmly welcomed by the confreres working in the US: Fr Richard Awange CSSp, Fr Philip Ojibo CSSp, Fr Francis Okih CSSp, and Fr Mathias Idyu CSSp. Throughout his stay, the Provincial took turn to visit the confreres in their respective communities, where he engaged in meaningful discussions with them. To the glory of God, our

confreres are doing well in the US, both in their places of pastoral engagements and studies.

To further strengthen the ties and forge a path for collaboration with the US Province, the Superior had a fruitful exchange with Fr John Forgaty, CSSp, the Superior of US Province, regarding ongoing projects in the Province, mission appeals, scholarships, and other potential opportunities for collaboration.



Superior with confreres at Trinity Hall, Duquesne University

The Superior also had the opportunity to extend the scope of his canonical visit to visiting other confreres, communities and Spiritan institutions in the US. He spent significant time at the Duquesne University of the Holy Spirit, Pittsburgh, where he engaged with some faculty members, staff, and students of the University. This also offered him the opportunity of sharing in the Spiritan fraternity and hospitality of the Centre for Spiritan Studies of the Duquesne University through shared meals,

discussions and exchange of meaningful experiences that reflected the rich diversity of the Spiritan Family and our shared mission.



Superior with some Spiritan confreres and religious in Boston College

On the whole, the canonical visit to North-America was not only an important step in fostering stronger ties among our confreres working there, but also a affirmation of a synergy and collaboration that can exist between the two provinces.

The Superior returned to the Provincialate in Makurdi with optimism, joy and verve, being hopeful of the fecundity of his visitation.

Welcome home, Fr Provincial!



Superior with Fr Richard Awange, CSSp and Bishop Gerard Kincanas of Tucson Diocese

## **FIRST PROFESSION AND RENEWAL OF VOWS**

n the 8<sup>th</sup> of September, 2025, the Noviatie community, Aliade, and the environs of St Michael's Secondary School, Aliade, witnessed a throng of confreres and the faithful who travelled from within and without to witness the First Religious Profession of Vows of eight novices and the Renewal of Vows of ten



confreres. Among the eight novices who made their Temporary commitments, 3 were from the Province of Nigeria South-West, 2 from the Province of Nigeria South-East, 1 from the Province of Ghana, and 2 from the Province of Nigeria North-East - Okwazi Elija, CSSp and Kaigama Moses, CSSp, while Demenenge Donald, CSSp made his Temporary commitments at the Holy Ghost Novitiate Chapel Awo-Ommama, where he had his novitiate year. For the confreres who renewed their vows, 2 were from the Province of Nigeria South currently on PME in Nigeria North-East (Nwafor James CSSp and Kelenna Gideon CSSp), 1 from the Province of Cameroon (Caliel Nguekap CSSp), and 7 from the Province of Nigeria North-East (Ioryange Michael CSSp, Iornenge Mathew CSSp, Faga Suur CSSp, Odiba Christian CSSp, Kurga Emmanuel CSSp, Alexander Onoja CSSp, Ombugadu Christopher CSSp).

The Holy Mass, which began at 9am was celebrated by the Provincial

Superior, Revd Fr Ortese Jude Ortese, CSSp at the St Michael's Secondary School Chapel, Aliade. Fr Dr Azenda Ikyeh, CSSp, the Novice Master, and Fr Wilfred Agyiga, CSSp, the moderator of the recollection for the renewal of vows, directly flanked him. Many other priests confreres, deacons, and scholastics came to share the day with our confreres. In his homily, the Chief Celebrant, made an insightful exploration of the Evangelical Counsels, which lie at the heart of the religious life. He emphasized the transformative effect of embracing these counsels, not just as obligations, but as pathways to deeper communion with God and service to Others. He affirmed the interconnectedness of the vows and how faithfulness to them sets one free and available for the mission of the Congregation. He exhorted those to be professed and those for the renewal of vows to make prayer their habit and to always make recourse to the Blessed Virgin Mary for succour.

After the Homily, the novices made their first profession of vows, which was followed by the renewal of vows. The Provincial Superior received their vows and welcomed them to the Congregation of the Holy Spirit under the Protection of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. They also received warm religious embrace from all the professed confreres who were present, as a sign of welcome to the Congregation.

In his vote of thanks, the Novice Master, Fr Dr Azenda, thanked the Provincial Superior for the synergy that exists between the PLT and the Novitiate Community. He thanked all the confreres present for their solidarity. He expressed immense gratitude to those who are the benefactors of the Novitiate, among

whom are some confreres and some Diocesan priests. He prayed for God's blessings upon them all, and for journey mercies back home.

After the celebration of the Holy Mass, the confreres were invited to the novitiate community for the blessing of a newly installed Solar Energy for the community. This project was realized thanks to the generous donations from some confreres, to help alleviate the intermittent power supply in the



novitiate community. The Provincial Superior led the rite of blessing, in the company of all confreres. The Superior thanked the novice master who not only saw this solar project to fruitful but who also did some renovation work and repairs in the house. After the blessing, a reception and entertainment was provided by the Novitiate community to all those present, both confreres and faithful alike.

We congratulate the newly professed and wish them well as they begin preparations for their PME. Best wishes to the confreres who renewed their vows as they continue to discern their vocation in the second cycle of formation.



## THE INAUGURATION OF THE 2025-2026 POSTULANCY YEAR

ith profound joy and gratitude to G o d, the Congregation of the Holy Ghost, Province of Nigeria North East celebrated the official inauguration of the 2025-2026 Postulancy Session on Sunday, October 5, 2025, at St. Mary's Catholic Church, Yola Town, Catholic

Diocese of Yola, Adamawa State. The Postulancy Director, Rev. Fr. Paschal Faya KAMANO, CSSp, was the Chief Celebrant. In his homily, Fr Pascal explained Jesus' teaching that faith, even in small amounts, can accomplish great things. However, he also emphasized that our service to God is not about earning rewards or thanks but rather about fulfilling our duty. When we have done all we are supposed to do, we should humbly recognize that we are still unworthy servants. Thus, Claude-François Poullart des Places and Fr. Francis Mary Paul Libermann's commitment gives radiant testimony to the Spiritan charism and the call to live the Gospel in fraternity, humility, and service.

On that joyful day, ten new postulants were officially welcomed into the postulancy program for the academic year 2025-2026 and they were introduce to the St Mary's Yola



2025/2026 Postulants with their Director

Christian family. These young men are embarking on a transformative journey of prayer, discernment, and communal living, inspired by the spirit of Claude-Francois Poullart des Places and Fr. Francis Mary Paul Libermann. The students came from different parts of the country, including Adamawa, Benue, Taraba, and Jos. Out of the ten brothers, two have completed their university studies, and eight have completed their Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations (SSCE).

We thank God for the grace given to us and extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Provincial Superior and his esteemed Council for their trust, prayer support. A car gift was given to help postulancy activities to flow smoothly. This car was already very helpful in conveying the postulants from the Provincial House in Makurdi to the Postulancy community in Yola.

Thanks to all who contributed to making this day a reality. In a special way, we sincerely thank the parish priest of St Mary's, Fr Alumuku Emmanuel who always stands to make sure that everything is going well in the house.

As we celebrate this new beginning, we continue to pray for grace, strength, and perseverance for each and everyone, specially for our brothers (postulants), may they walk the path of faith and formation through Christ our Lord. Amen

Rev. Fr. Paschal Faya KAMANO, CSSp Postulancy Director



The Province Donates a Bus to the Postulancy

# THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE SPIRITAN NURSERY & PRIMARY SCHOOL, ATOOKYAA, NORTH-BANK, MAKURDI By:

## Fr Gbagyo Thomas Terungwa CSSp.

### 1.0. INTRODUCTION

Admittedly, education is the key success and it remains a strong tool for human development. Based on this fact, the Holy Ghost Congregation, Province of Nigeria North-East established Spiritan Nursery & Primary School Atookyaa, in North-Bank, Makurdi, to develop young minds to become successful and future leaders. The aim is to raise this institution to international standard of education through innovative skills, with the vision of building a standard Secondary School. We are dedicated to the restoration of dignity and discipline among children, keeping in mind the moral decadence of our society, by reinstating the lost values and norms in our society. We equally intend to promote spiritual prospects in the minds of those we instruct.

### 2.0. THE APPOINTMENT OF THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

Thomas Terungwa CSSp) as the new Administrator of the school on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2025 and the official Hand-Over was given to me in August. This was due to the immediate and urgent developmental elements the school needed. Over the years of the establishment of this institution, the Congregation and the Province paid very little attention to facility. The present administration saw a great need to register the presence of the Holy Ghost Fathers & Brothers in this establishment to improve in the structures, learning and the methods of teaching. Guided by the vow of obedience, I gladly accepted the appointment.

### 2.1. MANDATE

The mandate and the directive given to me by the Provincial Superior and the PLT is to firmly establish this school with international framework, leading to the establishment of a Standard Secondary School with intellectual and spiritual developments of the young people.

### 3.0. ACHIEVEMENTS

With the help of God's grace, we have achieved a lot within a short time. These include:

3.1. Construction of Administrative Block: On arrival, I discovered no administrative block in the school and immediately began the work of constructing a temporal Administrative Block. We are now having the following offices: Office of the Administrator, Office of the Secretary, Office of the Bursar, Headmaster's Office, Staff Room.

However, we need Computers in these offices, a Printer, Photocopier and a Generator. We are yet to step-down electricity in this school.

3.2. The Opening of School Bank Account: There was no official Bank Account for the School. We recorded huge success in opening the first official Bank account for the school.

Account No: 0236339775

Account Name: Spiritan Nursery &

Primary School, Atookyaa



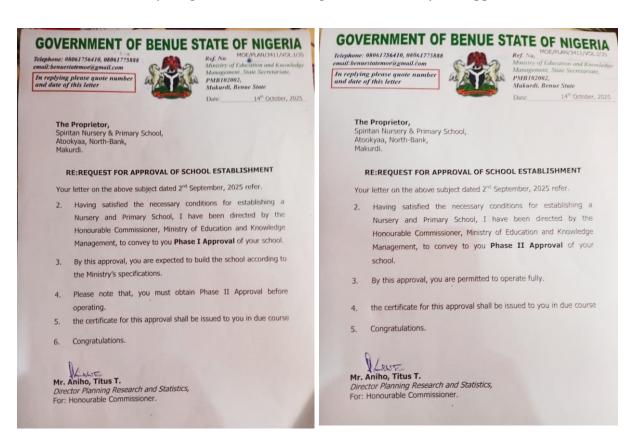




## Bank: Union Bank

This will help us to have a clear and credible financial structure in this establishment for the Province, and will equally create an atmosphere of accountability concerning the financial records of the school. It will also help parents and the general public to understand the new level of development the school is aiming at.

3.3. Official Approval of the School by Benue State Government: In view of the recent development and the on-going restructuring, the school was officially Supervised, Inspected and Approved by the Ministry of Education, and the Area Education Office of the Benue State Government on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2025. We intend to achieve more by the grace of God as time goes on, and with your supports.



### 4.0 VALUES TO BE PROMOTED IN OUR SCHOOL

Given the moral decadence in our society today, we intend to promote moral and ethical values in the minds of our children, leading to the formation of a better society at future date. The values to be promoted include: Modesty, Kindness, Love, Goodness, Humility, Respect for elders, Discipline, Christian, Catholic and Spiritan Spirituality etc. Our vision is a holistic education and formation that integrates all aspects of life and equips our pupils adequately for the future.

### **SPECIAL APPEAL**

Kindly assist us as we renovate our school. What do we need?

Plywood - 30PCS @ N8, 000= N240, 000

2/3 - 80PCS @ NIOOO = N80,000

Battling - 160PCS @ N400 = N64, 000

3 inches nail - 1 BAG = N 34, 000

Paints 30 Buckets @ N15, 000 = N450, 000

2 trips of sharp sand (a) N30, 000 = NO, 000

Workmanship = N 100,000

Laptop computer

Printer

Photocopier

Generator

Textbooks ETC.

You Can Also Donate: Account Details

Account No: 0236339775

Account Name: Spiritan Nursery & Primary School Atookyaa

Bank: Union Bank

If you wish to support any of our development plan, please contact the school administrator

# **DECISIONS OF THE PLT**

New Placements and Transfers

- Fr Anthony Sevali, CSSp. Parish Priest, Holy Spirit Parish, Wukari
- Fr Udemebraye Kelvin, CSSp. Assistant Parish Priest, St Paul's Kontein, Gboko
- Fr Paschal Kamano, CSSp. Director, Holy Ghost Postulancy, Yola.
- Fr Gaga Cliford, CSSp. Principal, St Mary's Secondary School, Yola.
- Fr James Akpagher, CSSp. Spiritan Development Centre, Gboko.
- Revd Peter Amase, CSSp. St Patrick's Agbakyor, Makurdi.

Congratulations, dear confreres, on your new appointments, and best wishes in your new apostolates.



# BEREAVMENTS

- Fr Rapahel Nyihemba, CSSp, lost both parents on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of April, 2025.
- Terkimbi Paul Terna lost his father on the  $30^{\text{th}}$  of May, 2025.
- Fr John Atuba lost his younger brother on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August, 2025.
- The mother of Late Fr Thaddaeus Chia, CSSp, passed on, on the  $10^{\mbox{\tiny th}}$  of August, 2025.
- Fr Ternenge Daniel Ugande, CSSp, lost his father on the 4<sup>th</sup> of September, 2025.
- Martins Ekere, CSSp, lost her mother on the  $26^{th}$  of September, 2025.
- Fr Mathias Alonyenu, CSSp, lost the father on the 19<sup>th</sup> of October, 2025.

Our heartfelt sympathies to our confreres for their losses. May God grant the deceased eternal rest. Amen.

A Publication of the Office of Communications, Congregation of the Holy Spirit, (Spiritans) Province of Nigeria North-East.

Holy Ghost Provincialate, No 5, Fr Alia Street, New GRA, Makurdi,Benue State, Nigeria.

> Editor: Fr Kenneth Oori, C.S.Sp. Tel: +234 813 341 9480 Graphic Designer: Donald Tyonum, CSSp Tel: +234 706 215 0144