

FATHER'S SUNDAY MESSAGE

Beloved Fathers,

We bring you greetings of love, peace and hope, through Him who alone is Lord and King over all, even Jesus the Christ. Please join us to worship The Majesty of He who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light, the God and Father of all, who, out of His infinite love, grace and mercy, has kept us all through this challenging time.

As we welcome you to this year's celebration, we gladly affirm that the mere fact that we are celebrating today, even in the midst of this pandemic, is a confirmation that **“nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”** We appreciate the commitment of our CMF leadership at all levels and applaud the support of all men in their different church stations to our life and ministry together.

The theme of our celebration and conference this year is a reminding call on all men and fathers to be alive to our individual and collective responsibility as committed to us by God in creation. **“Man Guard Your Possession.”**

As we read from Genesis Chapter one verses 26-30, God created man with full power and authority to dominate and subdue the entire earth and all that dwell in it. However, from the fall of man in the Garden of Eden to the crucifixion of Christ, we see as weakness of mind, selfish desires, disobedience to God and friendship with the devil, continue to deprive man of this divine possession. In our time, the recent increase in cases of rape, kidnapping, violence against the vulnerable, shedding of innocent blood, indecent dressing, inordinate material acquisition, and all forms of falsehood, point to the fact that man has lost grip of his possession in God and so has **“left the Creator to worship the created.”** Today the entire world is held hostage by Corona Virus, a pandemic whose source is the fall of man and his inability to Guard his Possession and place of authority over the created world. This trend must be checked and the Church must take the lead.

Therefore as we celebrate this year, we call on all men and fathers to rise up and take their rightful places of authority and leadership beginning with our homes and families. Our nation and world need fathers who will align their will with that of God to lead God fearing and decent children. Men who will be open to their faults and

seek godly ways for amendment. Men whose yes is yes and no is no at all times and in all circumstances. We need men who understand that they are created in the image of God and so that success in life demands absolute dependence on, submission to, and trust in, Him and Him alone.

As our Lord Jesus directs in our text (Luke 11:21), the only way for any man to Guard his Possession and so fulfill his divine mandate is to be ready with all his weapons. We therefore charge all men, particularly our Diocesan faithful, to seek out and put on all the weapons provided through the Holy Spirit so as to be able to withstand the wiles of the enemy. We must take seriously our communal worship and Sunday School programs and other activities that deepen our faith in, and knowledge of, Christ and so remain faithful witnesses of His love to all. We must not allow the present time and its challenges deprive us of who we are in God. We must strive to Guard our place and Possession jealously trusting in Christ through whom we are destined to be more than conquerors.

We once again congratulate all our families on this year's celebration as we wish you all a happy celebration. Stay safe and ever blessed.

Your Brother and Bishop,

†NATH, ABA NGWA NORTH.