



CONGREGATION OF THE SERVANTS OF CHARITY
OUR LADY OF HOPE VICE PROVINCE AFRICA

DON GUANELLA INSTITUTION FOR CHILDREN
WITH DISABILITIES IN AFRICA

FLAGOFF CEREMONY OF HER **30 YEARS IN AFRICA ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS**

Date: 22 October, 2022 | Time: 11:00am | Venue: Maria Assumpta Cathedral, Owerri Imo State

HOLY MASS BY:

HIS GRACE Most, MOST REVD. DR. LUCIUS IWEJURU UGOJI,
Archbishop, Catholic Archdiocese of Owerri/ President,
Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria CBCN.



NIGERIA



TANZANIA



DR CONGO



GHANA

BACKGROUND:

Children with disability are constantly grappling with the agony of rejection in everyday life because of the complexities of parenting a child with special needs. Majority of children living with physical, mental or intellectual disabilities are often despised and, sadly some are locked up by their parents because they are considered to be a disgrace or even a curse by the evil spirits.

Instructively, all rights and freedoms granted to all members of the human society unreservedly include children with disabilities and for this reason the General Assembly of the United Nations adopting the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and privileges in 1948 strongly canvassed for the promotion and fostering of all such rights and privileges in the event of, among all circumstances, child disability.

This is a FLAGOFF plenary for a year-long anniversary and activities which seeks to lead public conversation on Right-to-Life advocacy action with relevant institutions of governments in Africa, rehabilitation institutions, donor agencies and diplomatic community, the SDGs and relevant NGOs in mainstreaming sustainable rehabilitation and support strategy for child disability in Africa.

This anniversary program is propelled by these issues and the exigencies therein.

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OBJECTIVES:

- To bring to the fore the exigencies for continuous engagement in strategic interventions for children with disabilities in Africa by relevant government and cooperate institutions and the international donor agencies.
- To Foster dialogue and share comparable lessons on trends, challenges, opportunities and prospects in handling children with special needs at family level and general society.
- To reassert the urgent need to end discrimination in all its forms against children with disabilities and achieve integrated, prosperous, stable and peaceful society that is productively engaged in the global arena.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

- ✓ Framework for effectively mainstreaming child disability perspectives in the human development agenda in Africa.
- ✓ Deepened synergy, coordination and cooperation between relevant agencies and rehabilitation institutions for improved access to health care, education, rehabilitation for children with disabilities.

PARTICIPANTS ANALYSIS:

The FLAGOFF event shall bring together key officials of relevant ministries, departments and agencies of state and federal government. Invitations are to be sent to the leadership of religious institutions, men and women of goodwill, non-governmental organizations and stakeholders in the field of disabilities.

Invitations are also extended to relevant civil society organizations; technology organizations and foreign donor and development institutions and partners like UNICEF, USAID, DFID, UBEC etc., and members of the press.

ABOUT THE CONGREGATION:

Congregation of the Servants of Charity is an international congregation of Priests and Brothers, a Clerical Institute of Pontifical Right founded in Italy by St. Louis Guanella on **March 25, 1908** and has since then spread to so many parts of the world, providing among other things, charity on rehabilitation and care for children with special needs in precisely 27 nations of the world.

In 1989, the first Guanellian missionaries led by the then Provincial Superior of the Sacred Heart Province, Northern Italy, **Don Maurizio Bianchi** visited Africa with **Don Wladimiro Bogoni**. The then Catholic Bishop of Owerri Diocese, **Most Rev. Dr. Mark Unegbu** received and hosted these early missionaries who came to do what Philip told Nathaniel “come and see” (Jn. 1:46). This visit was subsequently followed by other

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visits, all in preparation for the definitive arrival of the Congregation in Africa. In 1992 the congregation started her presence in Africa in the Nigerian Church and society through the establishment of a center for the diagnosis, consultancy and rehabilitation of persons with intellectual disability in the Archdiocese of Owerri, precisely in Nnebukwu, Oguta L.G.A. of Imo State.

Today, those early modest beginnings have borne great fruits in offering diagnostic, consultative and rehabilitative and care services to children with intellectual and other forms of disabilities in Nigeria with state-of-the-art facilities in Imo, Oyo and Lagos States, and with same approach in other African countries like Democratic Republic of Congo since 1996, Ghana since 1997 and recently Tanzania in 2016.

Presently, Don Guanella Rehabilitation institutes in Nigeria and these other countries in Africa runs both boarding and day-care rehabilitative assistance with these activities in its various centers such as: the special school, physiotherapy clinics and the speech therapy clinics. Other services include also occupational therapies through agricultural activities like Poultry, Fishery, Piggery, Bakery, Garri Production, Palm Oil, Crop Farming, etc. In addition, our centers also have a medical clinic/pharmacy for taking care of the health needs of our special children.



Very Rev. Fr. Kelechi Maduforo SC.
Superior, Africa Vice Province



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