

## YOU NEED ANY HELP?

Contact the Cathedral Office for all necessary information and the Office will direct you to the appropriate persons to help. Below are the Contact Persons.

- A. **For Booking of all Services of the Church**  
*The Dean; The Canon Residentiary*
- B. **For Social Welfare and Charity**  
*The Dean; The Rev. Dr. S. Opaaje; Dr. (Mrs.) Irene Omogbehin 08033223803*
- C. **For Cathedral Societies**  
*The Dean; The Society Chaplains; Presidents & Secretaries of Societies*
- D. **For The Elderly Ministry**  
*The Dean; Chief (Mrs.) Ayo Akideinde - 07068610707*
- E. **For The Evangelical Ministry**  
*The Dean; Rev. Canon Benson Odude; Mr. Cyril Mgbamoka - 07053334081*
- F. **For Cathedral Missionary Society**  
*The Dean; Rev. Dr. Benjamin Okere; Mr Tunji Odeneye. - 08033163337*
- G. **For the Children Ministry**  
*The Dean; The Rev. Canon B. Odude, Mr. Tunji Odeneye - 08033163337;*
- H. **For The Youth Ministry**  
*The Dean, Rev. Ayodeji Oluwatusin; Chief (Mrs.) Funmi Ogunbadejo – 08033025033; Mr. Dayo Egbedeyi - 08022865591*
- I. **For The Boys' & Girls Brigade; Boys' & Girls' Guild**  
*The Dean, The Rev. Ayodeji Oluwatusin; Mrs A.O. Agara, Mrs C.F. Akinrotimi 08022791113; Mr Ayo Tetede - 08020691247*
- J. **For The Medical Board**  
*The Dean; Rev. Dr. Benjamin Okere; Prof. (Mrs.) Ronke Akinsete 0802300049*
- K. **For The Counselling Ministry**  
*The Dean; Rev. Canon Odude, Dr. (Mrs) Irene Okwerekwu – 08023078162*
- L. **For the Prisons & Hospital Ministry**  
*The Dean; Rev. (Dr). Benjamin Okere; Mrs. Babarinsa - 08031334211.*
- M. **For ETS Discipleship Training**  
*The Dean; Rev. Dr. Benjamin Okere; Mr Tunji Odeneye – 0803-3163337; Dr (Mrs) Oyin Ilo*
- N. **For The Home Fellowship**  
*The Dean; Ven. J. Adekanye, Rev. Dr. B. Okere, Sir. Godson I. Chijindu- 08033025458*
- O. **For Singles' and Couples' Fellowship**  
*The Dean; Rev. Ayodeji Oluwatusin; Mr. Steve Aladesawe- 08033261047*
- P. **For Intercessory Ministry**  
*The Dean; Rev. Dr. Samuel Opaaje, Engr. T. Adejuyigbe- 08037227105*
- Q. **For Sports Ministry**  
*The Dean; The Canon Residentiary, Mr Desmond Odiase- 08033066901 Mr Steve Ahua - 07038816041*
- R. **For Board of Directors for Economic Empowerment**  
*The Dean; Rev. Ayodeji Oluwatusin; Dr. Oladimeji Alo; Mrs Segilola Olawoyin - 08074533508*
- S. **For Cathedral Christian Mothers Matters**  
*The Dean; Mrs. A.O. Agara; Mrs. Folake Owolabi - 08023156546*
- T. **For Chaplains to Societies**  
*The Dean; The Canon Residentiary*
- U. **For The Choir**  
*The Dean; Mr Sunday Olawuwo - 08023030357*
- V. **For Booking of the Hall**  
*The Dean, Mrs. Tola Famade - 0803-3109378*
- W. **For Booking of the Guest House**  
*Mr. Jide Afolabi - 08037128186; Tobi Balogun -08033716752*

**Below are the Telephone Numbers of the Cathedral Office, the Dean and the Cathedral Priests. You can contact these phones as need be.**

The Cathedral Office	0811-1114588
The Dean	0803-7152811
The Ven. Festus Olowosile	0803-4003552
The Ven. Gbenga Oniye	0803-3564593
The Ven. James Adekanye	0803-5806344
The Ven. Azubike Ahubelem	0803-3081617
The Rev. Canon Benson Odude	0802-3608782
The Rev. Dr. Samuel Opaaje	08 06-3097612
The Rev. Dr. Benjamin Chijioke Okere	0802-3270247
The Rev. Opeyemi Ibikunle	0803-0573299
The Rev. Ayodeji Oluwatusin	0802-7562421

## DIOCESE OF LAGOS WEST

(Anglican Communion)



### ARCHBISHOP VINING MEMORIAL CHURCH CATHEDRAL

Oba Akinjobi Way, GRA, Ikeja

Founded – March, 1964

P.O. Box 506, Ikeja, Lagos

Tel: 0811-1114588

Website: [www.avmcc.org.ng](http://www.avmcc.org.ng)

E-mail: [info@avmcc.org.ng](mailto:info@avmcc.org.ng)

[archbishopviningchurchcathedral@yahoo.com](mailto:archbishopviningchurchcathedral@yahoo.com)

Follow Us On [avmccgraikeja](https://www.facebook.com/avmccgraikeja) [@avmccathedral](https://twitter.com/avmccathedral)

[#avmc\\_cathedral](https://www.instagram.com/avmc_cathedral)



Vol. 16/08/35/2020

#### Our Vision:

"CHRIST FOR ALL NATIONS"

#### Our 2020 Mission:

**"THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH"**  
**Romans 1:17**

A GOOD INDICATOR OF YOUR SPIRITUAL TEMPERATURE IS YOUR EAGERNESS TO COME TO THE CHURCH (PS 122:1). NEVER ALLOW YOUR SEAT TO BE EMPTY FOR AN EMPTY SEAT IS AN EMPTY HEAD AND IN HIS PRESENCE ONLY ARE FULLNESS OF JOY AND PLEASURES.

#### WEEKLY BULLETIN

Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> August - Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2020

#### TRINITY 12

**THEME: SERVING AS SHEEP AMONG WOLVES**

**Sub Theme: Thanking God as Youths**

**Without Reservations**

**Colour: Green**

**Mr. Adetunji Adekoya**  
*Cathedral Warden*

**Mr. Charles Ojo**  
*Cathedral Warden*

**The Ven. Adegoke O. Agara**  
*The Dean of the Cathedral*

**The Rt. Rev. Dr. James O. Odedeji**  
*The Bishop, Diocese of Lagos West*

**Please Take A Copy**

**Support God's Mission through the Covenant Seed**  
**Be A Diocesan Covenant Seeder**

## AVMCC MEDIA

Welcome to the Live Broadcast

Notice of Service: Please be informed that our SERVICE ON SUNDAYS during the lockdown will always start at 9.00am unless otherwise advised. Kindly join us Live on YOU TUBE.

<https://www.YouTube.com/avmccmedia>.

Facebook.com/AVMCCathedral/Live

Audio Transmission Mixlr - [www.mixlr.com/avmcc](http://www.mixlr.com/avmcc)

Kindly subscribe to this channel and you won't have to await a link to join every online broadcast.

### 1. SERVICES FOR SUNDAY – 30<sup>th</sup> AUGUST, 2020

#### A. 7.00 am HOLY COMMUNION YOUTH HARVEST

**Celebrant:** *The Rev. Ayodeji Oluwatusin*

**Preacher:** *Oluwadara Openiyi*

- ❖ Processional Hymn: VSH 65 'O Lord my God...'
- ❖ Praise & Worship
- ❖ Preparation to Penitence – *Miss Sola Aladesawe*
- ❖ The Epistle: *Ephesians 5:18-20 – Tejiri Oghenekaro*
- ❖ Gradual Hymn: CH 691
- ❖ The Gospel: *Luke 17:11-19-The Rev. Gbenga Aladese*
- ❖ Praise & Thanksgiving Songs

#### ❖ **SERMON**

- ❖ Nicene Creed & Intercession – *Ifesinachi Eze*
- ❖ The Peace (*Let there be peace*)
- ❖ All Offerings: Praises
- {First Fruit, Tithes, Building, Covenant Seed, Sunday Offering & All other offerings}*
- ❖ The Eucharistic Prayers
- ❖ The Administration: *Worship Songs*
- ❖ The Ablution: *'Sing to the Lord of Harvest'*
- ❖ Post Communion Prayer
- ❖ **Thanksgiving:**

- i. Month End Thanksgiving
- ii. Harvest Thanksgiving
- iii. **Clergy Harvest:** *The Ven. Azubike E. Ahubelem & Family*
- iv. Youth Harvest Thanksgiving
- v. Family Harvest: *(as indicated... pg. 9)*
- vi. 48<sup>th</sup> Years of Wedding Anniversary of Sir. Pharm. Deji Osinoiki family & God's numerous blessings.
- vii. 66<sup>th</sup> Birthday thanksgiving of Chief (Engr.) Elijah O. Osibajo & God's numerous blessings.

- ❖ Closing Prayer & Benediction
- ❖ Notices
- ❖ Withdrawal Hymn: CH 552

#### B. 9.00 am MATTINS YOUTH HARVEST

**Cantor:** *Daniella Oji*

**Preacher:** *Rotimi Towry-Coker*

- ❖ Processional Hymn: *'Be glad in the Lord...'*
- ❖ Praise & Worship
- ❖ Call to Worship

## C. ACTIVITIES FOR THE WEEK

Monday, August 31, 2020

Colour: Green

**Epistle:** *Acts 11:19-30*

**Gospel:** *John 8:21-30*

**Hymns:** *CH 506, CH 496, VSH 21, CH 373*

**Prayer Points:**

1. Let Your Hand be with us for good, O Lord.
2. Give me grace to do Your will in all circumstances, O Lord God.

Tuesday, September 1, 2020

Colour: Green

**6.00am: HOUR OF BLESSINGS**

**Epistle:** *Acts 12:1-17*

**Gospel:** *John 8:33-47*

**Hymns:** *CH 516, CH 83, VSH 64, CH 153*

**Prayer Points:**

1. O Lord, deliver me from the shackles of satanic imprisonment
2. Let me not be ignorant of Your truth, O Lord.

### BIBLE STUDY PREVIEW

#### GATHERING OF THE NOBLES - ACTS 17:10-11

Wednesday, September 2, 2020

Colour: Green

**Epistle:** *Acts 12:18-25*

**Gospel:** *John 8:47-59*

**Hymns:** *CH 3, CH CS 18, CH 202, CH 539*

**Prayer Points:**

1. Dethrone the Herod of my life, O Lord, and all those waiting for my downfall.
2. Make me a partaker of the benefits of Your grace, O Lord.

### HOURS OF DIVINE SETTLEMENT – 1 PETER 5:10

**Prayer Leader:** *The Ven. James Adekanye*

**THEME:** *GRANT US HEART OF WISDOM, O LORD – PSALM 90:12*

Thursday, September 3, 2020

Colour: Green

**Epistle:** *Acts 13:1-12*

**Gospel:** *John 9:1-17*

**Hymns:** *CH 498, CH 369, VSH 63, CH 623*

**Prayer Points:**

1. Raise Your standard against the enemies of Your Church, O God.
2. Manifest Your works in my challenging situations, O God.

**3.00pm: Wake Keep for Late Mrs. Christiana Famuyide at her residence.**

Friday, September 4, 2020

Colour: Green

**Epistle:** *Acts 13:13-25*

**Gospel:** *John 9:18-41*

**Hymns:** *CH 18, VSH 19, CH 270, CH 614*

**Prayer Points:**

1. Bless my seed unto profitability, O Lord.
2. O Lord, perform Your miracles in my life to the confusion of my enemies.

**9.00am: Funeral Service for Late Mrs. Christiana Famuyide**

Saturday, September 5, 2020

Colour: Green

**Epistle:** *Acts 13:26-43*

**Gospel:** *John 10:1-18*

**Hymns:** *CH 510, VSH 78, VSH 59, CH 360*

**Prayer Points:**

1. Bless my going in and going out, and let me find pasture, O Lord my provider
2. Fortify my life against evil arrows.

**11.30am: Wedding**

*Pastor Uchenna Ifediegwu & Miss Grace Agbo*

## A. CLERGY MOVEMENT

By divine permission and by the Episcopal seal of our father and Diocesan **THE RT. REV. DR. JAMES OLUSOLA ODEDEJI** the following clergymen and wives are moving this week.

1. THE REV. CANON BENSON & MRS. FLORENCE ODUDE moving to ST. LUKE'S CHURCH AMJE.
2. THE REV. BOLARINWA & MRS. OSINEYE moving in to AVMCC to join and strengthen the Clergy workforce.
3. THE REV. OLUKAYODE & MRS. FASOGBON moving into AVMCC to join and complement the Clergy workforce.

**NB: WE COVET YOUR PRAYERS FOR THE OUT GOING and INCOMING CLERGY AND WIVES.**

## B. CONSECRATION & ENTHRONMENT **THE VENERABLE ADEGOKE OLUDARE & MRS OLUTOYIN AGARA**

1. VALEDICTORY SERVICE SUNDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2020
2. CONSECRATION RETREAT WEDNESDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER - MONDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2020
3. CONSECRATION SERVICE TUESDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2020  
*VENUE: THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF THE ADVENT, LIFE CAMP, GWARINPA, ABUJA.*  
*TIME: 9.00AM.*
4. GENERAL SYNOD ABUJA - TUESDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER - FRIDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2020.
5. DEPARTURE TO IDOANI SATURDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2020
6. ENTHRONMENT - TUESDAY 29<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2020  
*VENUE: THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF THE HOLY TRINITY, IDOANI*  
*TIME: 11.00AM*

**WE COVET YOUR PRAYERS AND YOUR  
ACTIVE PARTICIPATION**

- ❖ Psalm 67 *{To be Chanted}*
- ❖ 1<sup>st</sup> Lesson: **1 Kings 3:4-14- Ademidun Agbola**
- ❖ Te Deum
- ❖ 2<sup>nd</sup> Lesson: **Luke 17:11-19- Amarachi Otogbor**
- ❖ Apostle's Creed - Collects
- ❖ Hymn before sermon: CH 552
- ❖ **SERMON**
- ❖ Praises & Thanksgiving Songs
- ❖ Intercession – Grace
- ❖ The Offerings Choruses  
*{First Fruit, Tithes, Building, Covenant Seed, Sunday Offering & All other offerings}*
- ❖ **Thanksgiving:**
  - i. Month End Thanksgiving
  - ii. Harvest Thanksgiving
  - iii. **Clergy Harvest: The Ven. Azubike E. Ahubelem & Family**
  - iv. Youth Harvest Thanksgiving
  - v. Family Harvest: *(as indicated... pg. 9)*
  - vi. 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday thanksgiving of Lady Boma Nsirimobi & God's numerous blessings.
  - vii. 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday thanksgiving of Mrs. Bisi Ojuri & God's numerous blessings.
  - viii. 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday thanksgiving of Mr. Taiwo Ibidapo-Obe & God's numerous blessings.
- ❖ Closing Prayer & Benediction
- ❖ Notices
- ❖ Withdrawal Hymn: *'My soul is so happy in Jesus' (Drumming) {Pg. 9}*

## C. 11.00 am **MATTINS YOUTH HARVEST**

- Cantor:** *Neky Ngwe*
- Preacher:** *Stanley Okeke*
- ❖ Processional Hymn: *'Come my brethren praise...' {Pg. 8}*
- ❖ Praise & Worship
- ❖ Call to Worship
- ❖ Psalm 67 *{To be Chanted}*
- ❖ 1<sup>st</sup> Lesson: **1 Kings 3:4-14- Oluwasijibomi Alofe**
- ❖ Te Deum
- ❖ 2<sup>nd</sup> Lesson: **Luke 17:11-19- Chinonye Ugwuanya**
- ❖ Apostle's Creed - Collects
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  - iv. Youth Harvest Thanksgiving
  - v. Family Harvest: *(as indicated... pg. 9)*
  - vi. 1<sup>st</sup> Year Remembrance thanksgiving of Late Engr. Taye Ajayi and God's numerous blessings on the family he left behind.
- ❖ Closing Prayer & Benediction
- ❖ Notices
- ❖ Withdrawal Hymn: VSH 81 *'All Things Praise Thee'*

## 2.00PM: PRIESTHOOD ORDINATION

### EVENT AHEAD

ONE DAY SYNOD – 10<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2020

## 2. SENTENCES FOR TRINITY 12

### Introductory Sentence

Let us love one another, because the source of love is God. Everyone who loves is a child of God and knows God.

*1 John 4:7.*

### Collect for Trinity 12:

Merciful receive, O Lord, the prayers of Your people, who call upon You; grant that they may know what they ought to do, and may have grace faithfully to accomplish it, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

### Post Communion Sentence

Rejoice in so far as you share Christ's sufferings that You also may rejoice and be glad when His glory is revealed.

*1 Peter 4:13*

## 3. PRAYER POINTS FOR TODAY – SUNDAY, 30<sup>th</sup> AUGUST, 2020

### A. Prayers for the Anglican Communion and for Christian Denominations and Organizations

- i. Pray for Henry Ndukuba our Primate, Olusina, Our Archbishop and Olusola our Bishop that God will lead them to glow with the glory of God in thanksgiving.
- ii. For the Rt. Rev. Solomon S. Gberegbara, his family and all members of the Diocese of Ogoni.

### B. Prayer for Nigeria & the World

- i. *Pray that the Lord of Host in His mercies will on account of His elects and remnants in Nigeria frustrate every raging from the pit of hell and all evil counsels, gang-ups and schemes in form of Boko Haram, Herdsmen and Islamization agenda so that Christianity in Nigeria will never go the way of **TURKEY** nor **NORTH AFRICA** in Jesus Name. Amen.*
- ii. We render null and void the effect of witchcraft upon the politics of Nigeria.
- iii. We pull down the stronghold of evil leaders working against Christians in all over the world
- iv. We pray that Nigeria will survive and thrive as a nation.

### C. Prayer for AVMCC

- i. Every imprisoned and buried potential in our youths come forth now in the name of God.
- ii. That all the works of the devil against us should be totally destroyed.
- iii. Pray for God's divine protection on all of us as we enter into the new month that He will keep us under His wings.

## HARVEST NEWS

### A. ALL MINISTRIES HARVEST WILL BE COMING UP ON THE 6<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2020.

### B. Family Harvest for today- Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> August, 2020

7.00am: Sir. Pharm. Deji Osinoiki & family, Chief Engr. Elijah O. Osibajo & family, Dr. Samuel Anyakora & family, Mr. Christopher Opara & family, Pharm. Gabriel Okoli & family,

9.00am: Mr. Oluwabusuyi Obisesan & family, Arc. Deji Ojuri & family, Sir. Alozie Nsirimobi & family, Mr. Wale Adegbite & family, Dr. Kikelomo Adegbite & family, Mr. Taiwo Ibidapo-Obe & family, Mr. Dapo Oshati & family, Mrs. Florence Olofin-Sodeinde & family,

11.00am: Chief (Mrs.) Florence Ogunbiyi & family,

### C. Society Harvest for Next - Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September, 2020 *Christian Unity Band & Band of Grace Societies*

## AVMCC CHURCH NEEDS

Dear Parishioners,

*Be encouraged to pick one or more of the items listed below to mark your birthday, wedding anniversary and other occasions of joy. Do endeavour to get in touch with the WARDENS for specifications or monetization.*

- \* Walkie-Talkie (4pcs) Hand sfree – (N160,000.00)
- \* Multimedia Headset (2pcs) – (N280,000.00)
- \* Proper Lighting – (N150,000.00)

## NEW LOCKDOWN RULES

1. Wash your heart with Christ's blood (Psalm 73:1).
2. Keep a social distance from evil (Job 28:28)
3. Avoid the crowd of wickedness and wicked men (Psalm 1:1)
4. Cover your mind from being infected from the sneeze of sin and hatred (Lev. 19:17)
5. Do not shake hands with abomination (Deut. 25:16)
6. Do not hug, heresy and false teachings (2 Pet. 2:1)
7. Be safe so that you will be saved (Jer. 17:14)
8. Sanitize your life with the Word of God (Psalm 1:2)
9. In case you notice any symptoms of sin, call the helpline of Christ in PRAYER (Jer. 33:3)
10. Always remember to boost your spiritual immunity  
With Faith and the Power of the Holy Spirit (Jude 1:20)

## CLOSING HYMN FOR 9.00AM

1. My soul is so happy in Jesus,  
For He is so precious to me.  
His voice it is music to hear it  
His face it is heaven to see.  
*I am happy in Him,  
I am happy in Him  
My soul with delight He fills day and night  
For I am happy in Him*
2. He sought me so long ere I knew Him,  
When wandering a-far from the fold  
Safe home in His arms He hath bro't me  
To where there are pleasure un-told.
3. His love and His mercy surround me  
His grace like a river doth flow  
His spirit, to guide and to comfort,  
Is with me wherever I go.
4. They say I shall someday be like Him,  
My cross and my burden lay down  
Till then I will ever be faithful  
In gather-ing gems for His crown. *Amen*

## PROCESSIONAL HYMN FOR 11.00AM

### Come, my brethren, praise your Saviour

Come, my brethren, praise your Saviour,  
let your songs with rapture swell,  
Through His grace have ye found favour,  
Who His boundless love can tell?

*Sing His praises!*

*For He hath done all things well.*

Louder yet, yea grander, greater,  
As the gladsome hearts rejoice  
In you Saviour, Lord, Creator,  
Swell, o swell the trembling chords;

*Wake the echoes!*

*Louder than the ocean's roar.*

What! ye tire? shame upon you!  
Dare ye cease to sing His praise?  
Shall the very stones provoke you?  
Louder sing your wondrous lays,

*Till creation,*

*Owens His mighty power to save.*

Blessed Lord, we will adore Thee,  
Praise Thee, bless Thee, shout and sing,  
Till that day when we shall see Thee,  
Crowning Thee, all glorious King;

*Hallelujah!*

*How the courts of glory ring.*

### =====

#### AVMCC BANK ACCOUNTS DETAILS

<u>BANK</u>	<u>ACCOUNT</u> <u>NUMBER</u>	<u>SORT</u> <u>CODE</u>	<u>PURPOSE</u>
ACCESS	0017948337	044151245	Evangelical Fund
WEMA	0120970667	035150695	Offering & Thanksgiving
FIRST	2025018178	011151841	Harvest (kindly signify the purpose e.g. Family harvest, Youth Harvest etc.)
FIRST	2001350641	011151841	Project Support
STANBIC	9200212515		
IBTC		221150027	First Fruits
GTB	0007899440	058152120	Tithes
ECO	0953002198		Building Fund
ZENITH	1011097083	057150314	Covenant Seed
WEMA	0122245798	035150695	Endowment Fund

#### AVMCC DEVELOPMENT FUND ACCOUNT

Account Name: AVMCC Development Fund  
Account Number: 1021733207  
Sort Code: 033154512  
Branch Address, UBA Plc, 51A Adeniyi Jones Street, Ikeja

## 4. THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK SUNDAY, 30<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 2020

THEME: SERVING AS SHEEP AMONG WOLVES

READINGS: PSALM 119:129-144; EXODUS 3:13-20;  
ROMANS 8:26-30; MATTHEW 10:16-22.

### INTRODUCTION:

As He sent out the twelve and gave them job description, Jesus spoke metaphorically in **Matthew 10:16**, using animals and bird as figure of speech to describe succinctly what the disciples should expect as they take up the task. Jesus said, "I am sending you out like a Sheep among wolves. Therefore be shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves". He went on to explain the reasons for the use of metaphor, and said (in verse 17): "Be on your guard against men; they will hand you over to the local council and flog you in their Synagogue".

"I AM" in the passage represent The LORD God who was the sender. His disciples or Christians are likened to the Sheep. These Sheep are sent to some People; the lost sheep of the house of Israel (verse 6). However, they should be prepared for persecution.

The New Testament believer have different appellation depending on what he should be doing or what he shouldn't be doing. For instance a Believer is referred to as a Son, a Saint, a Soldier, a Steward, a Stone, a Christian, and for our discourse, a Sheep. The Sheep according to the LORD would encounter wolves on the way, but should be on guard and be wise or shrewd as snake and as innocent or harmless as dove. In a nutshell, what is expected the disciples to achieve the challenge of the wolves was to adopt the instinctive characteristics of a snake and the dove.

The question of identity is what I think Jesus Christ was trying to answer with the figure of speech. First, He knew that His disciples need to have answer to the question, who am I? Otherwise they might have identity crisis when persecution arises. Second, they need to intimately know Him who sent them so that when the chips are down they stand with the one who has called them. Third, they also should know who their enemies (persecutors) are, and if possible know how to outwit or outsmart them in the course of discharging their services to God. Many Christians failed in their service and become spiritually impoverished because they fail to understand and appreciate their own spiritual identity.

Let's try Google for the characteristics meaning of some of the objects of illustration used in the passage by Jesus Christ. Having an understanding of their characters will help us take heed from our enemies and detractors.

**Who is a Sheep according to Google: The Believers/ disciples are the Sheep.**

They are usually quiet and gentle, holding themselves aloof from the world. In a herd ( say congregation of sheep and goats); the Sheep listen to their leaders and show esteem to them. Because of the obedient character of the sheep make them popular and beloved by mankind. This clearly pictures a true Christian. Jesus warned us to guard against the wolves; the enemies around.

**What are the features of wolves?**

They are very intelligent creatures. {Remember these are your Persecutors.} Wolves are intensely ambitious, they work hard by roaming largely long distance to track and trace their prey for hours.

The description of a wolf's character fits this passage: " Meanwhile Saul, still breathing out threats to murder the Lord's s disciples, went to the high priest and requested letters from him to the Synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, either men or women, he could bring them as prisoners to Jerusalem" {Acts 9:1-2}. Apostle Paul was once a wolf who miraculously converted to God and became a Believer of the Way: a sheep indeed. It means that there is hope for the miserable sinners and unbelievers out there! Let's continue to preach to them and pray for the salvation of their souls.

How should the sheep approach persecution as he/ she goes about the Master's assignments?

Jesus said," Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves".

The snake or serpent might be a bad Biblical example, but Jesus looked beyond the Garden of Eden experience, but rather drew the attention of believers to some innate qualities that a fragile sheep can learn from when the wolves are on rampage.

For instance, Google noted that many snakes camouflage marking and possess the ability to stay still so they are not detected; they rely on stealth to capture their pray. While the snake uses this approach when seeking its prey; a Christian can prayerfully hide by staying still and quiet when the enemies are around.

Snakes are "sneaky", they are good at sensing and analysing smell and messages; likewise, Jesus expected His disciples to use common sense by analysing situations and know what to do at every given time. Jesus escaped onslaught on several occasions because His time had not yet come (*John 7:30*). At another time He hid Himself from being stoned to death:" At this, they picked up stones to stone Him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds (8:59).

This was wisdom in action. While applying the wisdom of the snake, the quality of being harmless or the innocence or a dove should be handy. A dove is a loyal, affable and honest bird; a disciple should ensure that his loyalty and confidence in God in times of trouble should not be in doubt. "And call upon Me in the time of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shall glorify me" (*Ps 50:15*).

If the wolves find it difficult to cope with the dexterity of the snake on the rock; it is equally daunting to reach habitual flying doves who chose the cleft of the rock for hiding.

A sheep is different from a horse or a mule. The book of the Psalms says, "Be not like a horse or a mule, without understanding...( 32:9). A horse is an impetuous animal, always wanting to plunge forward in its own way; whereas a mule is always wanting to dig in its heels, obstinately refusing to budge. But that is not the sheep: a Christian is expected to always follow its leader; the shepherd; with God he must neither dash ahead in impetuous enthusiasm, nor lag behind in hesitant unbelief. He must be willing to ask and wait for the Lord's leading- and then obey without hesitation.

Remember that you have not sent yourself, I AM has sent you. God said to Moses, "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you". Go therefore in this Power and Might of the LORD.

***Have a blessed week ahead of you.***