

**AN APPRAISAL OF THE BISHOPRIC OF SAMUEL ONYUKU ELENWO  
IN THE DIOCESE OF NIGER DELTA NORTH, 1996-1999**

**Ben O. Onu**

Department of Religious and Cultural Studies,  
Faculty of Humanities. University of Port Harcourt.

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

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**Abstract**

*The Diocese of Niger Delta North was inaugurated May 16, 1996 as the 53<sup>rd</sup> Diocese in Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). The Right Reverend Samuel Onyuku Elenwo was translated from the residual Niger Delta Diocese to serve as the foundation Bishop of the Diocese. A bishop in the Church of God as a shepherd and leader, is called to proclaim the Gospel, guard the faith, unity and discipline of the Church; administer the Sacraments; and ordain Priests and deacons. Applying historical and participant observation methods, the paper ex-rayed the activities of bishop Elenwo in the light of these cardinal areas of his calling. It also examined the response of the faithful to his episcopal ministry before his voluntary retirement on December 31, 1999. The study revealed that Samuel Elenwo as fourth bishop of Niger Delta Diocese, first bishop from Ikwerre of the Niger Delta, and foundation bishop of DNDN, presided over four Synods. He canonically administered the diocese and ordained over one hundred persons into the deaconate and priesthood ministry of the Church. These acts positioned the diocese for unprecedented growth experienced in the succeeding years.*

**Key words:** Anglican Communion, Bishop, Diocese, ordination, and synod.

**Introduction**

The church reached the Niger Delta through Rev. Hope Masterton Waddell who started work at Calabar on April 10, 1846. However, it was the arrival of Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther at Bonny on April 29, 1865, that marked the commencement of active missionary work in the region. The mission area was declared Niger Delta Pastorate on April 29, 1892, and was constituted into a diocese on January 1, 1952. Samuel Elenwo was elected the fourth bishop of the Diocese of Niger Delta after Ebenezar Dimieari (1952-1961), Bara-Hart (1962-1970), and Yibo Fubara (1971-1980). The Diocese of Niger Delta North was created on May 16, 1996 after the Dioceses of Calabar (December 20, 1990) and Uyo (November 27, 1992). The emergence of Sam Elenwo as foundation bishop of DNDN was greeted with mix-feelings. The thrust of this paper to

appraise the leadership activities of Samuel Elenwo in the Diocese of Niger Delta North in the light of his calling. Bishop in Greek *epískopos* or *episcopus* is a generic word meaning "superintendency, over-sight, searching" in matters pertaining to the Church, the state, and the army. It means "an overseer, elder, or pastor charged with the responsibility of spiritual leadership in a local church in New Testament times" (*Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, 1986). While examining a bishop-elect, the Primate declares;

A Bishop in God's Church is called to be one with the Apostles, to proclaim Christ's resurrection and interpret the Gospel, and testify to Christ's sovereignty as Lord of lords and King of Kings. You are called to guard the faith, unity, and discipline of the Church, to celebrate and to provide for the administration of the Sacraments of the New Covenant, to ordain Priests, and Deacons, and to join in consecrating Bishops, and to be in all things a faithful pastor and wholesome example to the entire flock of Christ (BCP, 2007, p. 291).

These comprised the centrality of the demands in the calling of a person into the exalted ecclesiastical office of a Bishop. This paper provided answer to the question of who is Samuel Onyuku Elenwo; how did he empower the faithful as pioneer bishop of NDND, and position the Diocese for growth; and what was the response of the faithful to his bishopric?

### **Diocese of Niger Delta North**

The ecclesiastical entity known as Niger Delta North is a diocese in Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) created out of Niger Delta Diocese (NDD) and inaugurated on May 16, 1996 being Ascension Day at the Cathedral Church of Saint Paul Diobu, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. It is the 53<sup>rd</sup> diocese in Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) and with focus on missions and evangelism. The Primate of Church of Nigeria Most Rev. Joseph Abiodun Adetiloye presided at the inauguration service. It featured enthronement of the foundation Bishop, Right Reverend Samuel Onyuku Elenwo, translated from residual Niger Delta (Onu, 2014). At inauguration the diocese comprised of the Cathedral Church of Saint Paul, Diobu; Archdeaconries of Port Harcourt, Ahoada, Ikwerre, Etche, Ogoni, Evo, Ikwerre South, and Eleme.

### **Ministerial Formation of Samuel Onyuku Elenwo**

Samuel Onyuku Elenwo was born December 7, 1933 by Chief Edward Onyuku and Mrs Omekele Elenwo of Okporowo in Ogbakiri clan of Emuoha Local Government Area of Rivers State. He was nurtured by his grandmother, Mrs Nwereoma Onyuku Elenwo after the death of his mother at his tender age. His educational journey started at Central (Primary) School Okporowo-Ogbakiri, to Kalahari National College Buguma and New Bethel College Onitsha where he obtained General Certificate of Education Ordinary and Advanced level papers. He began civil service as a teacher and travelled to Lagos where he served as a Clerk with the then Electricity Corporation of Nigeria (now Power Holding Corporation of Nigeria). He was fondly called "S. O. Esq" due to his desire to be a lawyer.

His call to the ministry was noticed and encouraged by Rev. Canon H. Major Hunter (Seamen Chaplain) and Bishop Vinning among others at Lagos. He went to Immanuel College of Theology, Ibadan for his pastoral formation where he obtained a Diploma in theology. In 1957 he was ordained into the Holy Order by Bishop A.W. Howells of Lagos. He proceeded to the University of Nigeria, Nsukka in 1973 for his Bachelor's degree in Religion. In 1974, he was appointed a Commissioner in the Rivers State Teaching Service Commission by the first Military Governor of Rivers State, Commander Alfred P. Diette-Spiff. In the same year, he was installed honorary Canon of the Cathedral Church of Saint Stephen, Bonny by Bishop Yibo A. Fubara. He became a Radio Pastor in 1979 with the Rivers State Broadcasting Corporation in charge of Religious programmes. On the retirement of succeeding Bishop Y. A. Fubara, he was consecrated Bishop on Sunday March 1, 1981 by His Grace Most Rev Timothy Olufosoye, first Archbishop of the Province of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) at the Cathedral Church of Saint James Oke-Bola, Ibadan, and enthroned the fourth Bishop of Niger Delta Diocese on Sunday March 8, 1981 at the Cathedral Church of Saint Stephen, Bonny. A special thanksgiving service was held in his home Church, St. Paul's Okporowo - Ogbakiri on April 5, 1981 in appreciation of the mercies of God. The Church in the Niger Delta Diocese made considerable growth, and evangelism and was on the offensive during his episcopacy (Obuoforibo, 1997:11). He was married to Mrs Chinyere Elenwo, an amiable, humble, very unassuming and dynamic wife and mother. She encouraged her husband to bring in young, zealous and God fearing people into the ministry both in the Diocese of Niger Delta and Niger Delta North. He voluntarily retired December 31, 1999 and on June 17, 2008 he joined the Church triumphant at the age of seventy-five.

### **The Translation of Sam Elenwo as Bishop of Niger Delta North Diocese**

During his episcopacy in Niger Delta Diocese, the faithful of Ikwerre, Ogoni, Etche, Ekpeye, Ogba, and Eleme ethnic nationalities requested to be constituted into a Diocese. This was greeted with resistance that gave rise to misinterpretations between the “Riverine” and “Upland” members of the diocese. It was a pitiable situation for Elenwo as both parties “accused him of taking sides” (Obuoforibo, 1997, p.7). The strong desire and determination of the people, and their passion for the expansion of the work of God, drove them across many temporary obstacles. Eventually, the authorities of Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) in a Provincial Standing Committee meeting held in September 1995 at Kano, approved the creation of Diocese of Niger Delta North (Omodu, 1997, p. 24). The Archbishop, Metropolitan and Primate of all Nigeria, His Grace Most Rev Joseph Abiodun Adetiloye on Friday April 21, 1996 announced the election of Samuel O. Elenwo as Bishop of the new Diocese. He posted a “Notice of Election for the Niger Delta North Diocese” dated April 13, 1996, at the West door of St. Paul’s Church Diobu, Port Harcourt. Whatever may have been the factors behind the decision, it was accepted as God's plan for the expansion of His church. The scripture says, “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose” (Rom 8:28). Consequently, on May 16, 1996 being Ascension Day the DNDN was inaugurated at the Cathedral Church of Saint Paul Diobu, Port Harcourt as the 53<sup>rd</sup> diocese in Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). The Right Rev. Samuel Onyuku Elenwo was canonically translated and enthroned as the pioneer Bishop to nurture the young Diocese which he midwived. The epoch making service was led by the Primate and assisted by over thirty Bishops. Thus, Samuel O. Elenwo started a new phase of Episcopal ministry.

The Canon IX of the *Constitution & Canons of Church of Nigeria* (2020) states that; “Every Bishop appointed to the charge of a Diocese shall reside within his Diocese unless, upon the ground of ill-health or other important consideration for him to so do and of such exceptional circumstance as the primate shall decide”. Until his translation and enthronement, Bishop Elenwo remained in his Niger Delta Diocesan Bishop’s court situate at Harley Street, Port Harcourt. When he was translated a new Bishop was not immediately elected for the residual Diocese. It meant that there was no pressure on him to relocate to a new residence. On his enthronement, the bishop wilfully moved into the Bishop’s court located within the Cathedral premises and remained there until his retirement.

Some ungodly armed men attacked him, carted away some valuables as well as shot him on December 20, 1996. The attack made the Diocese to upgrade the standard of the complex. The Diocesan financial officers were immediately directed to “take action on the completion of the fencing of the Bishop’s court and the provision of iron gate or gates and proper tight security measure provided for the Bishop’s court” (*Synod Report, 1997:103*). The incident challenged officers of the Diocese to be more proactive in church development. The ungodly attack kept his health unstable. In 1998, he travelled to London for proper medical attention ahead of the Lambeth conference. The travel was to last more than 2 months, and he appointed Ven. Edmund C. Ogwo as Vicar-General in line with Canon IX (3) that;

No Diocesan Bishop shall absent himself from his Diocese for more than eight weeks without appointing under his hand and seal a Vicar-General with authority to administer the spiritualities of the Diocese, and to maintain discipline according to the constitution of the church of Nigeria (2020).

### **Synod Meetings**

It is expected that “Every fully organised Diocese shall have a Diocesan synod consisting of the Diocesan Bishop, a House of Clergy and a House of Laity” (Church of Nigeria Constitution & Canons, 2002:4). Prior to the inauguration of the Diocese, the residual had decided to have 1996 Synod to be hosted by Ahoada Archdeaconry. Preparations were already on going before the inauguration of the new diocese. Though there was an unconstitutional desire for the two dioceses to have a joint synod but it was rejected. In recognition of the preparations of Ahoada Archdeaconry, the spirit of love and unity in the diocese, it was decided that the maiden synod be hosted outside the Cathedral. Thus, the maiden synod which took place within three months of inauguration was hosted at Saint Paul’s church Ahoada. The first session of the first synod and three others presided by Bishop Sam Elenwo were held thus: July 27-30, 1996 (Saturday-Tuesday, 4days); Second Session of First Synod, May 3-7, 1997 (Saturday-Wednesday, 5days); Third Session of First Synod, May 23 - 26, 1998 (Saturday-Tuesday, 4 days); and First Session of Second Synod, May 15-18, 1999 (Saturday-Tuesday, 4days). In exception of the maiden synod, others were held in the week of “Ascension Day”.

The sermon of the Synod Sunday services was Ven. G.O.C. Okere (Diocese of Owerri), Rev. Canon Dr Sunday A. Fefegha, Rev. Canon Samuel Bayo-Odukoya and Most Rev. Dr Benjamin C. Nwankiti (Archbishop of Province II

and Bishop of Owerri Diocese). The daily mediations were delivered by Ven. Emmanuel S.O. Amadi, Rev. Canon Isaac O. Tejevbo, Very Rev. Fyneface N. Akah, and Ven. Isaac E. Orama. The synod motions were moved and seconded by the following: 1996-Sir Dr Fortunatus C. Obinna (General Manager Rivers State Utility Board) and Dr Mrs Ipalibo Banigo (Director-General Ministry of Health); 1997-Sir Prof Augustine I. Ahiauzu (Vice Chancellor Rivers State University of Science and Technology) and Prof Dafini D. Datubo-Brown (Consultant Surgeon University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital); 1998- Ven. Dr Sunday C. Nwachukwu (St. Nicholas Aluu-Uniport) and Engr. Pedro Joram Egbe (Weltek Ltd); and in 1999-Sir (Dr) Ben N. Birabi (Senator) and Dr G.A. Ikechi Nwogu (St Andrew's Rumuola). The Bishop Charge/Presidential address, characterised his plans for the year addressed six major issues bordering on the biography of quest speakers; history of host church; events within the Diocese; major developments at the Provincial and national church levels; matters of concern to the Church, State and Nation; and exposition of the synod theme.

His theological reflection based on each theme centred on gratitude to God, effectiveness in ministry, unity of purpose and faithfulness in all things. The maiden synod was "Ebenezer; for he said, 'Hitherto the Lord has helped us'" (I Sam 7:12, RSV). The attainment of Diocesan status after many years of struggle was made possible by divine assistance. God gives victory to a people and it should be celebrated in fellowship. Therefore, deliberate efforts must be made to build up unity in the Diocese as a people of God. In 1997 on "Role and relevance of the Church in the 21<sup>st</sup> century", he said, "God has chosen to love the world through the Church". For the church to remain relevant, her witness to the world must have social implications for rural transformation, and quality education for both leaders and the led. 1998 was "Called to be one" (John 17:11) he emphasised that, "Our oneness should consist in our having the same mind, will, and purpose... Efforts must be made to heal the existing divisions and to bring the different sections of the Christian church into close fellowship and union, in order to present one united front for evangelism and in fulfilment of our Lord's prayer and desire for the unity of his followers" (*Synod report, 1998, p.5*). "Called to be faithful in a plural world: The power of faith" (1 John 5:4) for 1999, stressed that, "Our faith in God should be progressive. As God's people, faithfulness entails loving our neighbours and carrying out our obligations to the Diocese.

According to Norman Doe (2003, p.113) "In diocesan government the bishop acts as president of the diocesan assembly and as chairman of diocesan executive bodies". Bishop Sam Elenwo, in addition to the four synods chaired

26 meetings of Diocesan Board (Regular and Emergency)-17, Diocesan Board of Finance-6, and Diocesan Location and Appointment Board-3. The Diocesan Board is the Standing Committee of the Synod and acts in the intervals between sessions of synod on its behalf. It is to be held "at least once in every three months". The Location and Appointment, "shall meet at least once a year", while Finance Board "shall meet at least once in every quarter of the year" (*Constitution & Canons DNDN*, 2012). These administrative assemblies helped the Diocesan to offer guidance and leadership to the clergy and lay. They helped to build confidence of faithful in the leadership. The structures for growth and development of the diocese received definition and members became ready to demonstrate their commitment in actualization of decisions as there was communality in decision making process, a key to easy implementation of policies. Opportunity was given for all to participate effectively in the governance of the diocese. Generally, it increased consolidated faithfulness and peaceful relationship among diocesan faithful. The views expressed, issues shared, and decisions reached at the various assemblies provided the policy and framework for faithfulness, peaceful relationship, growth, development and expansion of the diocese. The conversations in the course of the administrative assemblies gave rise to the following decisions that has a shaped the development of the diocese.

Authority and relationship between clergymen were streamlined. It was ruled that a disciplinary action would be taken against any "clergy in whose favour any obnoxious protest is made by parishioners" where he had served after a new disposition. The clashes of interests that had existed between some Archdeacons and their headquarters church vicars were resolved through the ruling that "Archdeacons would be Vicars of their headquarter churches" (*Synod report*, 1999:59). They are to take precedence over any other clergy in the headquarter church as well as superintend over all churches in their Archdeaconry. On the other hand, Archdeacons are to be relocated on the discretion of the Diocesan like other class of clergy.

The payment of Utility, Children education and Investment allowances were introduced to enhance welfare of church workers. In recognition of the vital role played by clergy wives in the mobilization of woman, it was ruled that a monthly allowance be paid to the Bishop's wife and all clergy and church teachers' wives by all churches in the Diocese (*Synod report*, 1999:57). The Diocese expressed their concern for the welfare of members and community people by regulating against extravagancy in burial. It was resolved that "the remains of a deceased member of this Diocese must be buried within 14 days

from the date of death". Again, service of songs was introduced In place of 'wake keeping' in honour of a deceased member (Synod report, 1998, p.58).

A decision to enhance church planting and spread of the gospel to grass root level was taken on November 12, 1997. Some city mega churches were mandated to sponsor new congregations in missionary areas. They were St. Paul's Cathedral, St. Matthew's Nkpogwu. St. Andrew's Rumuobiokani, St. John's Rumueme, St. Andrew's Rumuola, St. Michael's Rumuomasi, and All Saints Rumuokwurusi (*Synod Report 1998:8*). This resulted in the planting and strengthening of the following churches among others: Immanuel Church GRA in Port Harcourt; Bethel Church Rumuibekwe (now Diocese of Evo); St. James Church Oro-Akwor Rumueme (headquarters of Port Harcourt East, DNDN); and All Saints International Airport Omagwa (now Diocese of Ikwerre). There was a ruling which directed all "Districts and parishes to set aside certain amount in their annual budgets as training fund". This was to enhance the empowerment of clergy and lay workers for effective mission and evangelism.

In the drive for growth, the diocesan understood that "People are more receptive when they are approached by authentic Christians from within their own social network" (Hunter, 1979, p.126). This played out in giving impetus to congregational church growth. Efforts were made to grow the status of the Cathedral church of Saint Paul, Diobu as the principal church of the diocese and centre of excellence. The bishop started by appointing a Canon Residentiary to assist in the administration of the Cathedral. In May 1997, the Very Rev. Fyneface N. Akah was appointed Provost and on July 6, 1997 he was installed accordingly. An annual Cathedral lecture series was started June 17, 1999 when Rt. Rev. Ugochukwu U. Ezuoke, Bishop of Umuahia Diocese delivered an insightful and inspirational Lecture entitled "Pentecostalism: How does it fit into Contemporary Anglican liturgical tradition". The event also marked the 18<sup>th</sup> Consecration anniversary of the Bishop.

Some churches and group of churches were constituted and approved as Parishes and Archdeaconries. In doing this, respect was given to ethnicity and location as part of the socio-cultural network. Between June 1996 and December 3, 1999 ten Archdeaconries (as illustrated below) were created after proper inspection of the viability of the areas. Three were through Episcopal fait for the purpose of missionary expansion. Over 25 station churches were granted parish status and 5 ecclesiastical entities had their nomenclatures changed to reflect their growth experiences.

S/N	Archdeaconry	Approval date	Effective date
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1.	Omoku	June 12, 1996	Jan. 1, 1997
2.	Port Harcourt North	No. 13, 1996	-do-
3.	Upata	Nov. 12, 1997	Jan.
4.	Ikwerre North	Nov. 12, 1997	Jan 1, 1998
5.	Gokana	-do-	-do-
6.	Tai	-do-	-do-
7.	Port Harcourt Central	Dec. 17, 1998 (Fiat)	Jan 1, 2000
8.	Omuma	June 30, 1999	Jan 1, 2000
9.	Akpor	Oct. 1, 19999 (fiat)	-do-
10.	Port Harcourt West	Dec. 3, 1999 (Fiat)	-do-

Table I: Creation of new Archdeaconries

### Empowerment

To empower means “to give someone more confidence and/or strength to do something”. It is to authorize, delegate authority to or give “legal right to do something”. It has to do with the process of encouraging people to take charge of their lives. Norman Doe (2003:113) affirmed that “The function of appointing and licensing ordained and lay persons for ministry in the diocese is vested in the bishop”. Bishop Sam Elenwo pursued the task of qualifying and authorizing faithful to fulfil their ministry. As the “friend and guide of his clergy and people” he had eight interactive sessions at his Cathedral between June 11 and July 17, 1996 with all clergy, Diocesan officials, clergy wives, catechists, church teachers, clerks, lay readers, representatives of the Mothers' Union & Women's Guild, Anglican Youth Fellowship, Men's Christian Association, Sunday school Council, Choir and Mission and Evangelism Council from all the Archdeaconries. An orientation retreat was organized for Diocesan officials at the Cathedral on October 23, 1996. This was followed with a workshop for members of the various District and Parish Church Councils on November 20, 1996 and March 19, 1997 respectively.

He used his visits to individuals, parishes and districts to foster the true spiritual unity of the diocese. In his character of entering into “personal relation with every member of the flock”, he was always cheerful,

accommodating, very generous, hospitable and humble to a fault, not easily provoked and forgives easily. His fatherly words of encouragement, *Nye gbekei* meaning “clean person” and *Izi-nkpa nu obodo* meaning “you are important in the community” drew many closer to him as well as gave them great confidence to do ministry. He had pleasure in visiting residents at the Cathedral premises, encouraging and pronouncing God’s blessings upon them. He ministered the rite of Confirmation to all those that desired to grow in faith and licensed many Lay readers whom he regarded as “blue pastors” making them to put on blue preaching scarf.

In commitment to the development of lay ministry and equipping of all for service, he empowered enterprising men and women through knighthood and merit award. On Saturday August 7, 1999 fifteen men offered themselves to bring to bear like Saint Christopher their life in the home, profession and social environment all the implications of Christ's faith, and to willingly render individual services freely and constantly for the extension of the Church. The investiture of these into the Sacred Order of the knights of Saint Christopher (KSC) was at the Cathedral Church of Saint Paul Diobu. The service also featured Presentation of Merit Award to 52 persons selected from across the Diocese.

Many young men were empowered to enter the ordained ministry and a good number of serving clergy were given delegated authorities to function for the growth and expansion of the diocese. He made 105 deacons, ordained 102 priests, installed 31 honorary Canons of the Cathedral of Saint Paul Diobu and collated 15 Archdeacons between May 1996 and December 1999 as shown below. The 15 Archdeacons were Venerable Innocent W. Wopara; (April 4, 1997); George N. Waka; Amos A. Okirie; and Silas H. Oguzor. On July 27, 1997 included Dr Thompson N. Okujagu. December 20, 1998; Isaac O. Tejevbo; Lazarus O. Babia; Sunday Benaldogbara; Isaac E. Orama; Dr Sunday A. Fefegha; Simon A. Chikwe; Nhabinuchi P.F. Orluogwo; Dr Wellington O. Wotogbe-Weneka; Nyeche Okpobiri; and Samuel Bayo-Odukoya.

S/N	Office	Date	Number	Total	Average per Year
1.	Deacon	Aug 11, 1996	19	105	27
		Dec. 15, 1996	11		
		July 6, 1997	22		
		Dec 24, 1997	34		
		Nov 29, 1998	11		
		July 18, 1999	8		

2.	Priesthood	Aug 11, 1996 Dec. 15, 1996 July 6, 1997 Dec 24, 1997 Nov 29, 1998 July 18, 1999	9 18 19 12 21 23	102	26
3.	Canon	April 6, 1997 Dec 20, 1998 Oct 23, 1999	16 2 13	31	8
4.	Archdeacon	April 6, 1997 July 6, 1997 Dec 20, 1998 Oct 23, 1999	4 1 4 6	15	4

Table II: Empowerment of Clergy

Among the clergy he empowered either as Deacon, Priest, Canon or Archdeacon in DNDN, 9 have been elected consecrated and enthroned Bishops. They are: Clement N. Ekpeye (Deacon/Priest/Canon)-Ahoada; Solomon S. Gberegbara (Deacon/Priest/Canon)-Ogoni; Isaac E. Orama (Deacon/Priest/Canon/ Archdeacon)-Uyo; Sosthenes I. Eze (Deacon/Priest)-Enugu North;

Okechukwu P. Nwala (Deacon)-Etche; Archbishop Blessing C. Enyindah (Deacon/Priest)-Ikwerre; Chidi C. Oparaojiaku (Deacon/Priest/Canon)-Ohaji/Egbema; Emmanuel O.Oko-Jaja (Deacon/ Priest)-Niger Delta West Diocese; and Innocent U. Ordu (Deacon/Priest/Canon)-Evo. It will be recalled that eight other clergymen he empowered during his episcopacy in Niger Delta Diocese had been elected, consecrated and enthroned Diocesan Bishops , three of them presented became Archbishops. They include:

1. Archbishop Ignatius C.O. Kattey (Deacon/Priest/Canon/ Archdeacon),
2. Archbishop Emmanuel Nglass (Deacon/Priest/Canon/ Archdeacon), and
3. Archbishop W.G. Ekprikpo (Deacon/Priest/Canon/ Archdeacon).
4. Bishop Adolphus Amabebe (Deacon/Priest/Canon/ Archdeacon);
5. Bishop Gabriel H. Pepple (Deacon/Priest/Canon);
6. Bishop Tubo Abere (Deacon/Priest);
7. Bishop Anga F. Nyanabo (Deacon/Priest); and
8. Bishop Ralph C. Ebirien (Deacon/Priest/Canon).

In woman empowerment, two clergy wives appointed as Women Worker under Mrs Chinyere Elenwo later became Presidents of Diocesan Woman Ministry following the election of their husbands as Bishops. They are Mrs Beatrice Kattey wife of Archbishop Kattey and Mrs Chinyere Ordu wife of Bishop Ordu.

### **His Dreams**

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions (Joel 2:28, RSV). *Webster's* (2006, p.385) defined dream as "a visionary idea, anticipation". It was the desire of Bishop Sam Elenwo for the Diocese to be firmly established.

The peace, stability, progress and endowment of adequate human and material resources in the churches remains enough ingredients for growth and expansion of the diocese, in realization of this, he proposed for the creation of three additional Dioceses out of the DNDN. They were "Ogoni/Etche/Elemo, Ahoada, and Ikwerre" (*Synod Report* 1999, .50). In 2004, his dream came through and by 2010; DNDN had given birth to five new Dioceses of Ahoada (2004), Ogoni (2005), Etche (2009), Ikwerre (2009), and Evo (2010).

He considered the work of the Great Commission work to be executed through four major areas for effectiveness, consolidation and avoidance of ambiguity. The Diocesan Missionary Board were to coordinate mission and evangelism activities with emphasis on mobilization, training, empowerment of clergy and laity, prayers, revivals, research and regular outreaches using electronic and print media. The Directorate of Rural Evangelism was to ensure the spread of the gospel to the rural communities. Church planting unit to focus on the multiplication of Anglican worship centres within the city and beyond. The Great Anglican Revival Team to handle the business of 'training potential evangelists and missionaries" (*Synod report*, 1999, p.4).

The sustainability of the church will depend on capital investments among others. Thus, a Committee was appointed to execute physical developmental projects of the Diocese. It was proposed that a Diocesan Conference Centre with different facilities would be developed within the Diocese. Another investment dream was the establishment of Bishop Elenwo Missionary Hospital with a Diocesan Medical Board appointed for its realization. These projects were to help in reducing the financial burden of running the diocese on the faithful. There was also plan for the diocese to enter into a joint business venture with CSS Bookshop Ltd.

In his passion for the welfare and security of church workers, a Diocesan Educational Pensions Scheme (DEPS) was to be established. The scheme was to assist those that work in all educational institutions of and in the Diocese with the aim to motivate the academic and non-academic staff as they carry out their indirect evangelistic work. A Staff Welfare Committee was constituted in 1997 with the vision of working out conditions of service that will be favourable and make for a happy future for serving and retiring workers.

The School of Ordination was to be reorganized to include training of young dynamic clergymen in evangelism. For the purpose of maintaining qualitative clerical personnel, qualified and equipped brethren for missions and evangelism admitted into the Holy Order. Preferment of clergy is a "call for more effective service". He maintained that it was not as a debt owed to the clergy but a prerogative of a Bishop based on the worth, dedication, faithfulness, loyalty, doctrine, straightforwardness, initiative, and reliability among others of the clergy (*Synod Report, 1997, p.74*).

## **Conclusion**

The legacy of Samuel O. Elenwo in the development of DNDN received examination under some cardinal issues in the church life. It was discovered that he humbled himself and appreciated the initial provisions of the faithful by immediately moving into his bishopscourt. He maintained the government of the diocese by presiding over periodic administrative Board Meetings and annual synods. His policies and empowerment programmes lifted the standard of the Diocese and quality of both clergy and lay faithful for ministry within and outside the diocese. It was discovered that he applied himself to the principles of the Constitution and Canons of the Church in his foundational work. His dreams expressed his belief that the diocese will experience greater tremendous growth under the episcopacy of his successors in office. He believed that "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts" (Haggai 2:9). The growth that he desired was to flourish in a peaceful relationship among all as it is demanded of Christians to, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). The ministry of Bishop Samuel O. Elenwo featured "4 Fs", which are: fourth bishop of Niger Delta Diocese; first bishop of the Ikwerre nativity of the Niger Delta; foundation bishop of DNDN, and he presided over Four synod sessions in the DNDN. God honoured him by making one of

those he ecclesiastically empowered as a lay reader, deacon, priest, canon and archdeacon to succeed him as bishop of DNDN.

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Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Tansian University,  
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