

The Journey to the World Missions Congress

On December 31, 2021, a private meeting unexpectedly became an official summons. At the Episcopal House in Abuja, His Grace, Archbishop Henry Ndukuba, Primate of All Nigeria and Metropolitan, shared a compelling vision for the global mission component of *the Decade of the Reign of God*. This was nearly a year after he had convened a strategic training for the House of Bishops on *The Catalyst Course on World Evangelization*. “God’s Global Mission needs to take centre stage in our Church’s ministry at all levels,” he stressed, his even tone underscoring the importance of his words.

There were only two of us in that meeting, and I took the message as a marching order: to see the entire Church of Nigeria actively participate in God's mission to address the lukewarm interest of most leaders and members. The Church of Nigeria's capacity and potential for full engagement in global missions have largely remained untapped among both the laity and the clergy.

Having carefully listened to the Primate's vision for the mission, which is rooted in the Reign of God, and considering his passion for healthy church growth, I left that meeting with a mandate to propose a timely focus for the Communion on global mission. We acknowledge the need for leadership involvement and a grassroots approach to mobilisation, recruitment, and training God's people across the Communion to participate in God’s global mission.

To bring this vision to life, we suggest several strategic action plans for its implementation – luckily, the Primate approved a number of them.

1. We suggest that top leadership receive immediate sensitisation and reminders on the fundamentals of global missions, highlighting the local church's role in spreading the gospel from Jerusalem to the far corners of the earth. Building on this, the Bishop's house hosted a retreat to explore *The Catalyst Course on World Evangelisation (2022)* and *Leading the Church as Global Harvest Force (2023)*.
2. Revitalisation of the Church of Nigeria Missions Committee. The Primate swiftly reformed the Episcopal Mission Council, consisting of Archbishops, Bishops, and Laity that covered the entire Communion.
3. For this vision to succeed, it should be introduced in a way that's easy to implement for each province, rather than being imposed from the top down. The Primate has appointed

and inaugurated Provincial Mission Coordinating Bishops for each province. These bishops will serve as rallying points to inspire their provinces and promote effective mission engagement. They will also work closely with the Directorate of Missions to support mission efforts in their provinces, providing training, strategic funding, and ongoing assistance for Catalytic Mission programmes.

4. The Primate's vision is not meant for local champions or religious maintenance officers. Instead, it aims to maximise the contribution and impact of the Church of Nigeria's strategic sons and daughters in the diaspora. As recommended, the Primate's office, through the Directorate of Missions, has hosted several online global gatherings to explore the potential and connection of these brothers and sisters to the global vision. Although many are currently helping their dioceses stay afloat, we have conducted intensive training sessions for Directors of Missions to sharpen their passion and commitment to global mission outreach with quality local engagement.
5. We recommend strengthening the connections between the Primate's office and various denominational leaders and missions agencies as part of efforts to realise this missional vision. To this end, the office of the Primate holds consultations with select heads of denominations to address the increasing chaos in the religious landscape and the persistent opposition to the gospel, characterised by banditry, Fulani herdsmen attacks on innocent communities, and a worrying wave of kidnappings across Nigeria, especially in the north.

As brainstorming developed, the Primate formed a high-level committee to oversee the inaugural World Missions Congress, a significant global missions consultation. We are now gathering here as participants from October 1-4, 2025, for this important event.

Today marks the beginning of our initial consultation, as we gather at the World Missions Congress, themed 'Arise and Shine'. We believe this is our primary call to awaken the sleeping giant within us. Nigeria's landscape is currently over-churched but severely under-missioned, emphasising the need for a starting point where churches across all denominations can reassess their missions and actively participate in them.

Our churches urgently need revitalisation, with a strong call for the transformative power of the gospel to ignite a renewed passion for God's house among His people. We recognise the importance of expanding the definition of mission to encompass holistic involvement of God's

people in all aspects of life – reaching nations, tribes, and languages, as well as adopting a missional approach to the seven gates or mountains of human endeavour.

This Congress signifies the start of a new era. We hope it will stimulate your desire for the rich nourishment that God has prepared for the nations of the earth. It is an honour to be part of this historic event. We hope you will join your voice with others to tell your neighbours, from all walks of life: Arise and Shine, for your light has come!

Revd. Canon Dr. Timothy Olonade

Consultant, Global Missions Affairs to the Primate

October 1st, 2025