**IJEBU-ODE DIOCESE, NIGERIA MISSION APPEAL**

**Weekend of June 1 &2, 2024 @ Sacred Heart Parish, Aurora WI; St. Anthony Parish, Niagara WI, and St. Margaret Parish, Pembine, WI.**

At the weekend liturgies of June 1/2, 2024, Fr. Stephen Ositimehin, a diocesan priest from Ijebu-Ode diocese, Nigeria, will be here to speak about the missionary work currently going on in the Catholic Diocese of Ijebu-Ode, Nigeria. Fr. Stephen is presently ministering as Pastor at Saint Veronica Parish, Baltimore, MD. Before being assigned to take up parish ministry in the United States, he has worked in Ijebu-Ode diocese, Nigeria, a mission diocese for many years. **He has a vast knowledge of the rural area of the diocese, having played different roles in the affairs of the diocese.**

The Catholic Diocese of Ijebu-Ode is in Ogun State, the Western part of Nigeria, near Lagos. Ijebu-Ode diocese is a mission diocese. Her population is predominantly Muslim; 50% Muslims, 25% Christians of other denominations, 15% of Catholics and 10% of Traditional African believers. The diocese has 45 parishes with over 150 churches, 7 houses of formation, 12 religious houses for male and female religious groups. The Catholic population does not have enough material and financial resources to sustain her many developing programs of evangelization; sustenance of over 70 priests and 90 religious, training of 36 seminarians for the priesthood, and to sustain primary health care project for the villagers.

Our primary concern as a diocese is to spread the good news to all the nooks and crannies of the diocese through building schools, churches, training priests, religious and providing quality healthcare for the population. Your donation this year will help us to provide tuition fees for over 300 children in our Catholic schools, train 25 seminarians to become Priests, build 5 deep wells in rural communities without water and help us give over 500 children Malaria vaccines. The help and support of many generous people from all over the world, makes it possible to continue God’s work in the missions. Your own efforts to support the Missions all over the world are greatly appreciated. **Know that when you give to the Missions, you give to a good cause**.

Thank you as you warmly welcome Fr. Stephen Ositimehin to the parish and be generous to his Mission diocese. God bless you.