....bring peace to my country
Greetings,

Good people of God across the world, who have stood by us through thick and thin, stretching forth your hands in sympathy to demonstrate love and goodwill to the widows and orphans and the persecuted brethren. May your sun never set in the midday of your life!

In this special edition of our Newsletter, fourteen of our youths from the riot prone areas of the north are graduating this month. They tell us how and why they came to the Stephen Centre International Group of Schools at Abeokuta to study, how they lost one or both parents, and what the SCI means to them.

We asked some of them to tell us who a good leader is, and what he should do to bring peace to his country. These children express their personal views on what they should do if they were leaders. Read what they say.

The year 2008, Voice of the Christian Martyrs empowered some widows in Kaduna state. They received sums of money with which to trade. We visited some of them after a year to assess their progress. It is interesting to read what they say and how they used the money profitably.

Our country, Nigeria is seriously sick, just as an individual can be sick. George Herbert (1593-1633), a renowned poet of his time, was once sick. He put all his hope and trust in Christ.

Nigerians need Christ to rise like larks* and hold firmly to the wing of Christ, above hate and killings. We are passing through trying and tempting sad period in our history. Who knows who may die in the next bomb blast! This is why we need to surrender our lives to Christ.

As you enjoy reading through every article, may our awesome God enable you to be on your knees in a more serious prayer than before; that the Holy Spirit should arrest and convert both the sponsors and the killers of innocent people. He will do so if we continue to pray in earnest, Amen.

Let me end my greetings with the gospel which, when it saturates our hearts, it builds us up in love and grace with joy to allure us to obedience:

"Blessed - happy, to be envied, and spiritually prosperous (that is, with life-joy and satisfaction in God’s favour and salvation, regardless of their outward condition)- are the pure in spirit (the humble, rating themselves insignificant) for theirs is the kingdom of heaven! "Blessed - happy, enviably fortunate, and spiritually prosperous (that is, possessing the happiness produced by experience of God’s favour and especially conditioned by the revelation of His graces, regardless of their outward conditions)- are the pure in heart, for they shall see God!".

Matthew 5:3,8 (The Amplified Bible)
What I Would Do To Bring Peace To My Country

MARY JOHN

A leader is a responsible man or woman with the aims of directing and controlling people in the right way. He or she is usually elected or it could be an inheritance. If I ever become a leader of my country, I have a number of things I will like to do.
Firstly, I will tackle corruption, the mass of my people live in abject poverty, while a few through corruptions live in opulence.
Secondly, I would develop the technological aspect of my country; this is a major problem confronting Nigeria which still makes it an under-developed country. There are many graduates outside seeking for employment and they are unable to secure suitable jobs. If jobs could be provided, I believe that poverty will be reduced to the barest minimum. I would provide employment.
I will ensure that the round pegs are into the round holes for proper development. It is clear that most present day leaders are not carrying out their responsibilities properly. The power situation, -insufficient generation of electricity—is a case to note. The fundamental human rights of all citizens will be upheld according to the constitution in order to encourage the people. Laws against extra judicial killings and police brutality will be enacted, and enforced, to raise the standard of living of the people.
I have come to realize that since independence in Nigeria, no woman has been allowed to rule the country. According to the constitution, which states and I quote “All qualified adult citizens are allowed to vote and be voted for in an election”. This means that citizens including men and women who are qualified to rule should have equal right to rule the nation.
Mary John will like to study politics in future and will like to become the first female President in Nigeria. There is a saying, “Only a knife will tell you how the inside of a cocoyam is”.
If you have never been to Nigeria, you will not know the situation of the citizens. I know what my people face out there, many seek employment, admission into higher institutions, and there are those who do not have roof over their head.
I believe that there will be change if someone who feels for the people becomes the leader. So, I volunteer.
What I Would Do To Bring Peace To My Country

ISAH SHINKUT

Let us start by knowing the meaning of the words leader and peace. A leader is someone who leads a group of people or society especially a country. Peace means a state or situation where there is no war or violence in a country or an area.

As a leader, and to be able to maintain peace in one’s country then I need to lay a good example for my citizens or followers. Anything a leader does, the followers will also take his path.

For me as a leader in this country, to bring peace, definitely, I need to do some things which will not lead to crises or violence in the country. This can be done through the following:

Showing Zero Tribalism: Tribalism is simply the behavior or attitude, based on being loyal to one’s tribe or a group of people to which you belong to the neglect of others. To achieve my aim, I would have to drop this act and show love to every person so that everybody can benefit from the resources of the nation.

Provision of Educational Facilities: Looking at the northern states of Nigeria, the standard of education there is very low. Therefore, providing education for all will change their way of thinking and reasoning. By doing this, they will understand that violence is not the way to satisfy one’s need so therefore there will be peace and order.

Creation of Job Opportunity: Building of hospitals, schools, and constant supply of electricity and so many others will enable people in a country to have means of managing themselves without going to steal or all others so as to get something to feed them. By doing this, the time they are spending at work will not allow them to go out and disturb the peace of the nation either by killing or stealing.

Without the adequate distribution of the national resources, many people will like to fight for their own right so as to have what is naturally theirs. If the resources are adequately distributed, people will learn how to live in peace and harmony since they know what life is all about.

Lastly, I need to build up a strong security: In Nigeria of today, our security agents are not good in the sense that a police officer can see an armed robber robbing someone but he will never go near or come to the rescue of the person. But immediately the incident is over, you see him going there which is not proper. So what I will do is to pay them adequately and to train them very well and also supply them with weapons and vehicles for transportation. By doing this, some level of peace will be maintained in the country.

I believe that unless all these things are done in a nation, there will not be any form of peace. Thank you.

What I Would Do To Bring Peace To My Country

MESHACH TANKO ALI

The state of leading a group of people, especially the head of a country, institutions and others, is known as leadership. Leadership therefore entails total submission to the will and wishes of the people of a country. It means that a leader must foster the interest of his people first, so as to achieve the set down aims of his people.

If I were to be a leader of this great nation, I will firstly bear in mind the interest and needs of my people. Doing that would make me to achieve almost most of what I have in mind to do and thereby making my people to be highly satisfied with their needs and also meeting up with their desires and wants. Carrying my people along will be my utmost aim.

I will make sure that everything I do is done in the fear of God, because God chose leaders at various stages of peoples’ life. And by doing that, I am calling peace to dwell within my nation.

The future is there looking for good leaders to take people to it. The resources are there busy waiting for utilization. The masses are looking forward to seasoned leaders to lead them.

Therefore, if I fail to meet up with these things, there will be anarchy in the system. If I turn out to put aside the interest of mine own people, and looking forward to my own interest, I would not be a good leader.
Also, by doing that, I would be destroying peace. And instead of peace, there would be problems in the nation. But in order to allow peace to reign, I would meet all these pre-requisites before giving attention to my own self, because if my people are not okay, I see no reason why I should enjoy.

Leadership entails self-denials, abandonment of the so-called title, like 'Leader', and above all, putting in mind the masses to be like your own family. When you put someone in a position of your own family, brother, sister or a relation, you would definitely be kind to them. People would respect such a leader.

If I were to be a President, I will put in mind all these things, and thereby making my standard of leadership more efficient and effective.

Also, resources are not well distributed. Many people are not given the chance to utilize the resources in their own country. And when such people are not given such opportunity, they question themselves why they are citizens of that country! But if I were the President of this country, I would ensure equal distribution of resources, income, and may other things.

When someone carries another person along, there would be unity and peace. Everyone would try to do his or her best to make sure things work out well.

When my people are satisfied with everything they need, and there is stability (peace), then I can say I am a successful leader.

What I Would Do To Bring Peace To My Country

ABEDNEGO TANKO ALI

A leader is said to be an individual who holds a position of authority or someone who leads and directs a group of individuals or people in a country or an organization.

I ask myself, if I were a leader of this country, what can I do to bring peace to this country? I will try my possible best to make sure that everything in the country moves smoothly and to make sure that things are not tough for the less privileged and I would try my best to make sure that everyone is equal before the law so that those that are not noble in the society will not be denied of their rights but to make sure that there is equality before the law. And the major thing I will work on is for the country to maintain its peace, because when there is no peace in the country, things can never work well, but when we have and maintain peace then everybody will like the country rather than staying or living in disunity. But when we both join hands and work together then there will be peace.

Furthermore, I will make sure that the citizen enjoy the full level of good living by providing the following items:

1. Social amenities/infrastructural facilities
2. Employment opportunities
3. Eradication of terrorism
4. Encouraging peace and unity
5. Discouraging corruption
6. Prompt payment of salaries
7. Hearing the voice of the people
8. Improving the standard of living
9. Eradication of poverty

If I can only obtain all the above items, then there would be no way there would be major problems in the country.

Firstly, by the time social amenities are in place in the country, everybody will live in peace and harmony because all things are available. I will provide good roads, good communication, and constant supply of electricity and many more. Then peace shall reign, and there shall never be problems. By the time I am the leader that will be my focus as to make sure that every individual has suitable job or into an occupation that best suit him/her.

Secondly, when there are provision of employment opportunities to employ the jobless graduates that are everywhere in the country, there will be peace and harmony in the country. As a leader, that will be my focus as to make sure that every individual is having a suitable job or into an occupation that best suit him/her.

Thirdly, I will make sure that all the terrorists in the country are not in existence, because the law will be enforced.

Fourthly, I will make sure that there is a well-trained and specialized force that will maintain the law and punish offenders; especially those who prove to be above the laws and are stubborn. I will make sure that there is progress and peace in the country.
What I Would Do To Bring Peace To My Country

YAHAYA TANKO

Let us know who a leader is. A leader can be seen as a person who directs, coordinates, or leads a group of people, especially the head of a country, an organization with the aim of achieving set goals. Peace on the other hand is seen as a situation or a period of time in which there is no war or violence in a country or an area.

If I were opportune to be the leader of Nigeria, what I will do to make sure that I bring peace to the nation are as follows:

I will put the interest of the people at the forefront. Sometimes one will also consider his own interest but most importantly the interest of the people should be at the forefront. Why I say this is because when the needs of the people are met, it will give room for peace and harmony to set in.

Secondly, I will make sure that education is made free and compulsory to every person in the country. This will enable everyone to know the need for tolerance and peace in the society. It will also reduce the level of illiteracy in the country thereby making every individual to realize that there is need for peace and harmony and its importance in our daily living.

I will put all efforts to make sure that all forms of corruptions are eradicated from this country and I will treat every individual equally before the law. I will not in any form allow persons who have been caught in any dishonest act to go unpunished.

To bring peace to this country, I will make sure that resources of our country are distributed fairly and also I will put away any form of ethnicity and tribalism in the sense that, I will not put in mind that these are my people and so let me provide their needs at the expense of others but to make sure that we all live together as one nation and one people which will definitely foster peace and harmony in the country.

Furthermore, I will also make sure that I provide gainful employment to the individuals of the working class in the country thereby raising the standard of living of the people. Peace and harmony cannot exist in the country where the people are living in great hunger; therefore, I will make sure that resources, goods and services are made available to the people at reduced prices.

When someone carries another person along, there would be unity and peace. Everyone would try to do his own best to make sure that everything is working and moving on smoothly.

Leaders are not only rulers. Leaders direct someone or a group or an organization to the right path, so as to achieve set goals and aims. Rulers rule and dictate their own wishes, not the wishes of the masses. When everyone in the country is well satisfied, then peace and harmony can then set in and this can promote the country to a very greater height.

ELISHA MICHAEL

If I am to be a leader, what would I do to ensure peace in the nation? This is a question that requires a sensible and reasonable answer, in which action must be put in to enforce it.

First, I will avoid all forms of racism. That is discriminating against one or some tribes at the expense of others. Instead, I will create equality among all tribes both Igbos, Hausas, Yorubas so as to make sure there is peace in the nation.

Secondly, as a leader, I must live by example and also listen to the voice of the people. I will try my very best to abstain from all kinds of corruption that might be going on in the country thereby, providing all the basic needs and amenities for the citizens of the country and try to augment the standard of living so as to eradicate poverty, joblessness and illiteracy in the country. Because there is a common say that says “a hungry man is an angry man”. If I eradicate poverty it will result in peace making of the country.

Also, I will establish very strong armed forces, well trained and equipped with good and sophisticated weapons to defend the country against internal and external attack by the enemies and other forms of illegal act in the country.

Lastly, whoever fails to obey the constitution of the country shall be treated with iron hand.
Easter Wings

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store
Though foolishly he lost the same,
Decaying more and more
Till he became
Most poor:
With thee
O let me rise
As larks, harmoniously,
And sing this day thy victories:
Then shall the fell further the flight in me.

My tender age in sorrow did begin:
And still with sicknesses and shame
Thou didst so punish sin,
That I became
Most thin,
With thee
Let me combine,
And feel this day thy victories;
For, if I imp my wing on thine,
Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

George Herbert (1593-1633)

COMMENTS ON THE ABOVE POETRY:
By Rev. Sunday U. Estieet

THERE IS NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN
Are you currently in pains, in afflictions, or looking moody and in melancholy, so, you become detached and far from the gospel devices that abound everywhere, which drum their messages into our ears through sound and good gospel music, tracts and Sunday services and meetings plus revival crusades; importantly, from the precepts in the holy Book?
You need Christ!
Are you suffering from sicknesses, economic constrains, or perhaps you have lost loved ones to the unfamiliar murderous acts breezing across our country at the moments?
You need Christ!
I repeat, are you burdened over the unprecedented killings of Nigerians by Nigerians, and are you praying that the killings must stopped?

“Meaningless! Meaningless!
Says the preacher:
“Utterly meaningless!
Everything is meaningless” . . .
All things are wearisome,
More than one can say.
The eye never has enough of Seeing,
Nor the ear its fill of hearing.

What has been will be again,
What has been done will be done
Again;
There is nothing new under the Sun.
Is there anything of which one can Say;
"Look! This is something new”?
It was here already, long ago;
It was here before our time.

Ecclesiastes 1:2,8-10
(Oxford NIV Study Bible)

SERVANTS OF THE PERSECUTED CHURCH
Voice Of The Christian Martyrs
Assist The Widows

“...the idea behind the help is to assist them to move above poverty level to actually progress and live a happy life and put behind them the loss of their husbands; some houses and property; some children and relations.”

October 2008, some widows in the Kaduna state of Nigeria were empowered financially by the Voice of the Christian Martyrs to trade. The idea behind the help is to assist them to move above poverty level to actually progress and live a happy life and put behind them the loss of their husbands; some houses and property; some children and relations. They were the set of widows whose husbands were killed during the introduction of Sharia legal system in the state in the year 2000.

Unfortunately, when the Sharia legal system was introduced in Kaduna state, religious fanatics took to streets killing the Christians out of sheer lack of true information. They thought that the introduction of Sharia laws in the state meant total elimination of other members of non-Muslim religion. Perhaps their leaders did not inform them properly so they took to streets to kill the Christians. Maybe they were looking for an evil opportunity to slaughter non-Muslims. God knows all!

Since then, the widows of such murdered brethren suffered untold hardship. The Voice of the Christians Martyrs has been helping them in different ways, by kind and by cash. VCM bought grinding machines to some of them to put to commercial use to generate some fund to feed and to pay bus fare to SCI Centre to train. At the Centre, they learn sewing, knitting, while their wards learn computer skills.

Quite a lot of them may not be trained in any skill for one reason or the other, but would be assisted financially to do some other businesses of their choice down town. This is why many of them received cash to trade. After one year of receiving the money, we visited some of the widows at Kaduna state to see how they used the money. We shall soon visit the rest of the widows who received fund in other states to make an assessment of their progress. The following are what some of them told us at Kaduna state:

MRS. RUTH ELISHA

After the Muslim fanatics killed my husband in the year 2000, the Voice of the Christians Martyrs came to Kaduna to give the widows and other Christians some food items, and some grinding machines. They also took some children to train at Abeokuta, including my son, Godswill.

I was thinking what should I do to keep the family happy. I was thinking and praying God to help me so that I may have money to sell wrappers for the women at the central market at Kaduna. Suddenly, God answered my prayers.

2008, the VCM came to Kaduna and gave some of us the sum of (#29250)/2 hundred and ninety two Naira. So, I decided to go ahead and rent a shop in the market. I started my business on February 2, 2009. From February to November, I sold wrappers worth (#503250) five hundred and three thousand, two hundred and fifty Naira. I made a profit of (#115850) one hundred and fifteen thousand, eight hundred and fifty Naira. This is after I paid my tithe of (#10500) ten thousand five hundred Naira to the church.

I gave two wrappers to Pastors, two to orphans, two to widows. When my children came from Abeokuta on holiday, there was no difficulty in feeding them. Also had enough provision in the house. My mother is always sick, so I assist her by buying drugs for her. I was able to renovate my house. The ceiling was bad previously. I also plastered the building and the floor. I still have unsold goods in the store.

There are some materials the customers always ask for, but my capital is not enough for me to stock expensive dresses. I wish I have more money to invest. I thank the Voice of the Christians Martyrs for giving the capital to start this business. May God bless you all.

HOW MY HUSBAND DIED

My husband, Elisha Bulus was an auditor, and he worked in the office of the Auditor-General, Kaduna state, until his death. The trouble started on May 22, 2000 when the Muslim fanatics started killing the Christians. He was one of those who went to defend the Christians and the Churches. He met his death while he and his colleagues were protecting the neighbourhood. He was killed and his corpse was burnt.

On the following day, the news reached the family that he was late. The family went into action immediately, to find out the truth. On reaching the scene of action, we discovered that the bodies were heaped on each other before the killers set fire on them. The death were given mass burial right there because no one could identify his own person.

Before this incident, I had already gained an admission into the school of health technology, Panbegwa. Unfortunately, I could not go due to the death of my husband. Finally, I decided to read a certificate course in statistic with the Kaduna Polytechnic. Later, I went to study computer at Stephen Centre International, SCI, at Kaduna center. Due to lack of employment, I went into farming and petty trading during the dry season. I was very grateful when three of my children were admitted to study at Abeokuta free. It was a relief for the family.

Before I received help from the VCM, I was thinking of going back to school to study further. I thank God for everything.

Mrs Ruth Elisha and children
MRS. HAJARA MAGAJI

When I received the sum of (₦292,500) two hundred and ninety-two thousand five hundred Naira from the Voice of the Christian Martyrs in the year 2008, I invested it on provisions. I made profit from the business of selling provisions. I also used the money to train my daughter in the school. I pay my tithes regularly and I pay other contributions in the Church. I used the profit to feed myself. I used the profit to buy goats and feed them to produce young ones.

My shop is still full and I have some money in my bank account. I thank the Voice of the Christian Martyrs and may God bless you, Amen.

HOW MY HUSBAND DIED

My late husband, Magaji, was a retired army officer, and until his death, he was a staff with the Kaduna state ministry of youths. February 22, 2000, as early as 7 a.m., a large group of Muslims came and surrounded the entire compound at Ungwan Dosa. The compound consisted of many households, all of them are Christians.

Because of the riot, other Christians ran to the compound to take refuge. The total Christians in the compound on that day were thirty. The Muslims told me clearly that they were going to kill all of us, including the children. We demanded for the reason why they would kill us and pleaded with them to have mercy upon us. They refused to listen; instead, they began to throw stones and burnt motor tyres and threw them with the fire into the compound.

The Christians used water to put off the fire in the compound. The Christians became overwhelmed by the fire. They shouted for help, but no help came from anywhere. The battle for survival became very fierce, and the Muslims who were more in number, than the Christians, overpowered us. The Muslims killed twenty-one Christians out of thirty in that compound. Nine of them escaped with bruises.

I was particularly saved by two Muslims who were my customers. I had a foodstuff store and a provision store where I sold provisions and a tailoring shop. The two Muslims later took me to a nurse who treated me. I lost four children and a daughter-in-law and my husband to the Muslims in the attack. My son, Benjamin, and his sister, Sarah, escaped miraculously.

MRS. CECILIA A. AVONG

I was given the sum of (₦292,500) by the Voice of the Christian Martyrs to trade with. I decided to trade on grains. I sell both wholesale and retail.

Between July 22, 2009, and August 27, 2009, I made sales of (₦271,000) two hundred and seventy-one thousand Naira. The goods in stock worth about (₦28,000). When I calculated the old and the new stock in my store, I know that I am making profit in my business.

HOW MY HUSBAND DIED

My husband, Mr. Andrew Avong, was a staff of Nigeria Telecommunication Plc. (NITEL), and he was retired prematurely. May 22, 2000, he went to attend an interview on the following day after his retirement. During the course of interview, news filtered in that there was a riot within the town, thus everything broke up abruptly. On his way home, he ran into the rampaging Muslims at Tudu Wada, the Muslim enclave. Everywhere was taken over by the rioters. On spotting Andrew, the rioters ran and soaked him with petrol and set him ablaze, and they left him to die.

It was the combined Team of Soldier, Mobile Police and the regular Police who picked him up and took him to the 44-armed forces hospital and he was hospitalized for four days before he gave up the ghost.

My husband was not only doused with petrol and set on fire, he was stabbed several times on the body, even a deep cut on his head. Our home was burnt down by fire caused by the Muslim rioters at Angawan Amuuzu. All our personal belongings went with the fire; nothing could be salvaged as everyone ran away.

When I came in contact with the Voice of the Christian Martyrs, I received a tremendous help. I appreciate what the organization is doing and prayed that God will continue to strengthen them.

MRS. JUMMAI OSU

I was given the sum of (₦292,500) two hundred and ninety-two thousand and five hundred Naira by the VCM to trade with, in the month of October 2008. I decided to sell grains; beans, groundnut, maize, rice, soyabeans, etc. The business is moving well and I am making profit. I used the profit to feed myself and children. I used part of the money to travel to Abeokuta during our children's graduation.

I also used part of the money to register my son Jonathan to sit for WAEC as his result was not good enough. I am still going on with the business and getting more profit.

I thank God in a special way for using you to put smiles on my face. May the good Lord bless and reward you with all good things, Amen.
This month, July, 2012, Stephen Centre International Group of Schools shall send off another fourteen (14) students from the crises affected areas of the country, which have completed their Senior Secondary School. Some of them have spent more than ten years, some eight years and some less. The next step is to find Institutions of higher learning for them to study further. This we solicit your assistance to move them further into the higher society.

We have asked a few of them to tell us why and how they came to the Stephen Centre International Group of Schools to study. The following articles are what some of them have to say about the circumstances that brought them to Abeokuta. Read what they say:

**Meshach Tanko Ali**

The year 2006 witnessed troubles and uncertainties in my state, Kaduna, because of various riots. Muslims were against Christians.

On day, we were in our residence when we heard shouts of people in the neighbourhood. My father went to see what happened. We the children and our mother waited for his return. He did not come back that evening. That was the end of seeing him till now. My father was a Doctor. We do not know where his body was buried.

The office of the VCM at Kaduna recommended me to the Stephen Centre International (SCI) at Abeokuta to attend school. I started in Junior Secondary I in 2006 and completed Senior Secondary School this year. If I have the opportunity, I would like to remain and work here. I would like to be either a Musician or a Doctor. My hobby is acting and listening to good music. If I have the opportunity, I would also like to be a writer when I must have studied Mass Communication.

The Voice of the Christian Martyrs is an appropriate place that builds the young ones to achieve their ambition. My appreciation is first and foremost to the Director of VCM in Nigeria, Rev. Isaac O. Newton-Vvusu for God using him to help us. When I succeed, I shall contribute my own quota to help others because helping others means doing service to God.

**Abednego Tanko Ali**

My reason why I came to the Stephen Centre International to study is the same as what my brother stated above. It was a very sad experience when we realized that we have missed our father.

Personally, I have learnt so many things. First, I have learnt to put God first in all things. Others do not have the opportunity that I have in this mission to advance in education, particularly where I have free education, food, clothing and accommodation. These and many more make me to really appreciate those who made it possible for me to benefit from the offer here.

The situation in this country now is as if it is getting out of hand, especially in the northern part of Nigeria where innocent people are being killed. This does not show love. The word of God says we should love one another. I do not know why people should kill innocent people because of religion. I think that is because of lack of understanding. The leaders must not permit these evils to continue. Those who kill should be found out and punished.
JOSEPHINE SYLVANUS ATTAI

I am from Kano state. I came to SCI in the year 2006 after the crises between the Muslims and the Christians. During the crises, my father was killed. The Muslim killers met my father on the road along with other Christians, and they killed all of them.

Unfortunately, the government did nothing to help the family. When members of the Voice of the Christian Martyrs came to Kano to distribute food items to the victims of the riot, we met them and they gave us our own share.

My family members attend Evangelical Church of Christ in Nigeria (ECCN), and we are still members of the Church, including my mother. I was recommended to study at SCI by the Church authority at Kano. We are five in number from the family, three girls and two boys. My senior brother graduated in 2010, now at Nassarawa University.

Abeokuta is a peaceful place; in fact, the whole southern part of Nigeria. I would like to study Business Administration in the southern part of Nigeria. VCM gave my mother a sum of money to trade with and that has been a big help to the family. I also appreciate the help I have received here. When I have money, I would like to come back to help others who may be in a similar situation as I have been.

ZIPPORAH ZUGWA

I came to SCI in the year 2006 because my father was killed by the Muslim fundamentalists. The Kaduna office of SCI put me in contact with the VCM office in Lagos. Eventually, I was taken to Abeokuta to study free of charge.

My mother died 2004. After the death of my father in 2006, our grandmother started taking care of us till date. VCM gave her one grinding machine which she puts in commercial use to generate some fund to feed the family. We are two in number, one boy and one girl which our parents left behind. My brother is in primary V. I would like to study Business Administration. I appreciate the help I receive from VCM.

Advice: I would like to advise my fellow students to forget the past and focus on the future in order to make it in life.

RIKATU TAM WENG

During the crises between the Muslims and the Christians in 2002, my father was killed on the road as he was coming home. Some of the vital parts of his body like eyes were removed. In 2008, I was introduced to SCI to come and study free of charge.

My mother is doing some petty trading. We are two girls and our last born, a boy, all studying at the Stephen Centre International Group of Schools. When I complete my Secondary School with SCI, I would like to study Mass Communication or Theatre Art at the higher institution, if I succeed in getting someone to sponsor me.

Stephen Centre has helped me in many ways; also, Abeokuta in Ogun state and the southern Nigeria are peaceful. If I had a job here in the south, I would welcome the opportunity happily.

Advice: I would like to advise my fellow students to grasp every opportunity here with both hands and be consistent and studious in order to make it in life, and they should not think of other peoples' position and make themselves mean before others.

KVOU JEMIMA YAKUBU

The year 2002, Muslim fundamentalists took to streets and homes of the Christians and killed them indiscriminately. In the process, they killed my father on the road because he was a Christian, a member of the Church of Christ in Nigeria (COCIN).

My mother took over the responsibility of feeding six of us, one boy and five girls. In 2006, I was introduced to the Voice of the Christian Martyrs eventually I was taken to Abeokuta to study at the Stephen Centre International Group of Schools free. My younger brother is in primary 1. He joined me in 2008. VCM also empowered my mother with money to trade. She is now a petty trader.

I would like to study Business Administration when I have the sponsor. I appreciate the SCI very much for giving me total scholarship.
When riot started in Kaduna in the year 2000, I was with my father at home, but my mother was not around. My father decided to search for her. Not long after my father went to search for my mother, she came back, but my father did not return. At night, my mother went out searching for our Daddy, eventually, she found him in the hospital. He was seriously wounded. My mother took the dress he wore, which was stained with blood, to come home and wash. She returned to the hospital without seeing my father. But she saw other wounded victims and many dead bodies. Till this moment, we have not found his body.

We were six boys and one girl in the family at the time my father died. I am the last born. The only girl in the family is now dead. My mother contacted the Voice of the Christian Martyrs who brought me in the year 2005 to their sister institution, Stephen Centre International Group of Schools at Abeokuta to school. By the help of God, I shall graduate by July 2012, and I would like to study medicine if I have sponsors.

The situation in the country is something I never predicted would take place. At the moment, the value of Naira has deteriorated drastically. Before, we as Christians, we met and played together with Muslims. I do not think that we can mix together again.

The level of education in the north should be lifted as soon as possible. Most people there do not value education; therefore they place little value on life. Whatever they do, they always think that they are right. They must be educated to know the right and the wrong.

The government officials should live by example. They must also provide employment to the youths. They youths must not copy the bad example of some bad elders or leaders. There are rooms enough for everyone at the top, particularly those who are honest and hardworking in their various fields of specialization.

When the Muslim fanatics came in large number into our residence in 2000, they first dragged my mother outside with the baby at her back. My father went outside to resist the killers, but being many in number, they overpowered him and killed him. Most of us children ran to hide under the bed. Immediately, we relocated from the northern part of Kaduna to the southern part.

My junior brother and I were introduced by the office of the Voice of the Christian Martyrs at Kaduna to the

Michael Elisha

I came to the Stephen Centre International Group of Schools in September 9, 2007. I started in the Junior Secondary II. The reason for my coming to study at Abeokuta started from the year 2000. There was a serious crisis at Kaduna where I came from. Prior to that crisis, my father was serving with the National Youth Service. He had an accident and when the trouble started, he was not able to run. The rioters caught him and killed him and burnt his body to ashes. I was then six years old. The office of the Voice of the Christ Martyrs at Kaduna brought me to SCI at Abeokuta in Ogun state to study.

My stay at SCI made me to have many friends from different states of the Federation. Another thing is before I came here, I did not know how to tolerate people. I use to get angry at the least provocation. Now I can tolerate people, play and smile together. When we quarrel, we would settle and become friends again.

Our sponsors have done great things to us. I pray God to have mercy upon them.

Jerus Musa

I come from Gombe state of Nigeria. We were living at Kano state with my parents when riot erupted in 2004. During the riot, my father was killed. My mother took us back to Gombe state where my father comes from. It was about September of the same year that we returned to Kano. Fortunately, we met with the Voice of the Christian Martyrs through the DCC of Evangelical Church of West Africa at Kano.

My senior brother, Malachi and I were brought here in 2004 to study, while my junior sister came here in the year 2005. Malachi graduated 2010 and he is now studying history at the Ahmadu Bello University at Zaria in Kaduna state.

I would like to study computer Engineering. I really like this place. When I first came here, I did not like leaving my mother at home to come here. It was after a year, I adjusted and began to concentrate on my studies.

I thank our sponsors for everything they have done to help us.

Stephen Centre International Group of Schools at Abeokuta in Ogun state to study on scholarship. I was at primary IV in 2004 when I came here. I find the SCI to be a very interesting place to stay and study. So many good things have been deposited in me, both morally and academically and so on. I pray that God will open the eyes of the trouble makers to see the need for tolerance and live together with one another in peace.
The frightening spectacle in our country is surely momentary, and very much transitory. We have read about similar acts in history. It shall soon pass into the pages of history book, while the perpetrators shall reap the untold bitter harvest, a reward of their action soon, and from generation to generation. God abhors shedding of innocent blood. It is wickedness and God hates a wicked man.

I have chosen the poetry of George Herbert (1593-1633) titled; EASTER WINGS, because it has a message for us today. He gives us the hint to the solution to our problems, both individually and nationally. George was suffering from ill-health at the time he wrote his poetry. He refused to depend on something else but Christ. As bitter things may happen to individuals, they can also happen to the nation.

George begins his poem by reminding us that when God created man, He blessed him abundantly and gave him wealth. Man ‘foolishly’ lost the blessing of God because of sin. Sin brought the corruptive influence to the soul of man which has become weak gradually. ‘Decaying more and more’.

He tells us that at his young age he experienced sorrow and as he wrote the poem he was still experiencing sicknesses.

“My tender age in sorrow did begin
And still with sicknesses and shame”

He presents a unique style of writing, narrowing and expanding to show how punishment for sin reduces a sinner’s energy and disfigures his physical outlook, also brings sicknesses, which he believes made him: ‘Most thin’, just as when man ‘foolishly’ lost God’s blessing.

“Till he became
Most poor”.

George pointed out that the remedy is found in Christ’s power of resurrection.

This is an Easter poem. Christ rose from the death at Easter and overcame all impediments to man’s advancement on earth, and into eternity. The poet believed in Christ’s victory at Easter; he pleads that God would enable him to rise as larks;

“O let me rise,
As larks, harmoniously,
And sing this day thy victories”.

He would want to rejoice at Christ’s victory at Easter, even as he grasps the wings of Christ. “For, if I limp my wing on thine” in this context, grasp or hold firmly to the wing of Christ. George is using metaphor he is being emblematic to emphasize the need to lean on and depend on Christ’s victory for our problems. He would be healed; his spirt would also enter heaven when he dies, especially as he was “still with sicknesses and shame” when he wrote the poetry. He realized that he was incapable of helping himself. We need Christ to survive in this nation. The sponsors of suicide bombers need Christ! The killers of the innocent people need Christ! We must pray for them.

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David’s Last Prophetic Words

These are the last words of David
"The oracle of David son of Jesse, the oracle of the man exalted by the Most High, the man anointed by the God of Jacob, Israel's singer of songs:
"The Spirit of the Lord spoke through me; his word was on my tongue.

The God of Israel spoke, the Rock of Israel said to me:
When one rules over men in righteousness, when he rules in the fear of God, he is like the light of morning at sunrise on a cloudless morning, like the brightness after rain that brings the grass from the earth.
"Is not my house right with God? Has he not made with me an everlasting covenant, arranged and secured in every part? Will he not bring to fruition my salvation and grant me every desire?

But evil men are all to be cast aside like thorns, which are not gathered with the hand. Whoever touches thorns uses a tool of iron or the shaft of a spear; they are burned up where they lie"

2 Samuel 23:1-7 (Oxford NIV Study Bible)
Tortured for Christ

The trial of persecution and cruelty that the Wurmbrand endured is as timely as the day this compelling work was written. The world over, Christians continue to suffer for their faith. Among their number are men and women of whose struggles, we have yet to learn, but of whose travail Richard Wurmbrand has given us a searing, and ultimately Redeeming vision.

-Gary L. Bauer, Family Research Council.

Hearts of Fire

“Either you marry or you die if you are a Christian then there is no place for you in this city... You will die here alone.”

“Women have always been significant in the cause of Christ. Hearts of Fire thrillingly describes the work of eight women whose mission continues to be telling the world that He is risen, and with that resurrection comes love, grace, and forgiveness.

The Pastor’s Wife

In 1949, when Soviet propaganda was asserting that free Christian worship was being tolerated behind the Iron Curtain, the Communists arrested Pastor Richard Wurmbrand in Romania for secret Christian activities. The Pastor’s Wife is Sabina Wurmbrand’s true story of her efforts to get her husband released, her subsequent imprisonment and, above all, her unceasing efforts to help build a Christian underground church in restricted areas around the World.

Extreme Devotion

Are you up for a challenge? Then open this book and read just one of the 365 true accounts of men and women who totally sold out for Christ. See if it isn’t unlike any other devotional you’ve ever read.

Each story is true. Each story is unforgettable. Each story is extreme. Each story will change your life. Take the challenge today and see for yourself.
"Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them." [Hebrews 13:3]

A Christian in Russia was sentenced to ten years in prison for his faith. He left behind a wife with nine hungry children. The mission, "Jesus to the Communist world" helped them with a small sum of money and received the following amazing response from the wife.

"Glory be to the Lord that He has given us, too, to bear a little chip of His cross." (We complain about many trifles as being unbearable crosses. For her, a husband in prison and nine children to feed, without any source of income, was just a little chip of His cross.) "We must eat our bread with tears, but the Lord be praised for everything. I thank you with tears that the Lord has opened your hearts at such a big distance. Love has a long arm and stretched it out toward us. (When Paul enumerated all the attributes of love in 1 Corinthians 13, he forgot to mention that she has a long arm.)

"When we remained alone, the wicked ones said that we would not have wherewith to live, but praised be the Lord that He takes care, as He took care of Elijah, Daniel and of all who served Him.

"God has given me nine children who wait now for their father to come home, but their father put his life at stake for Christ and left his children to suffer for the faith once for all delivered by God to the saints."

Acts of the Apostles in the original is the only biblical book which ends abruptly in the midst of a sentence. It is an unfinished book. The heroism of the first Christians continues to this day. Let us always remember in prayer our brethren suffering in prison for their faith. And let us not forget their families.

Pastor Richard Wurmbrand (1909-2001)
Answer To The Atheist’s Hand Book

Is there a God? The confrontation between Christianity and Communism. Wherever people know how to write, they have a holy book. The Communist world has its Bible too, an Atheist’s Handbook first issued in Moscow in 1961. A summary of atheistic creeds, it is the collective work of specialists, has been translated into many languages, reprinted many times and is widely distributed in socialist countries. Its primary purpose is to show there is no God. Imprisoned by the Communists for fourteen years, Richard Wurmbrand answers the seven hundred pages of denial, affirming the existence of God and eternal life, Biblical truth and human worth.

From The Lips Of Children

“’The Bible is meant for children. Only the children of Israel came out of slavery in Egypt; the grown-ups stayed behind. Only the children of God enter heaven. It will be a country without any grown-ups.’ This observation by Richard Wurmbrand’s grandson Alex is just one of the many delightful anecdotes and children’s sayings in this attractively illustrated volume, which challenges Christians to take seriously Jesus’ teachings, that his followers must become like children. Some stories are amusing, some startling, some very moving, but all make us think about our faith. The anecdotal style could make this a useful source book.

In God’s Underground

Richard Wurmbrand, playboy turned preacher, was held for 14 years in Communist prisons. His jailers tried to force him to confess that he was part of an imperialist spy network. But in spite of beatings, torture, and drugging, his spirit did not break. For two years he was a patient in the ‘death room’ - so called because no other man had left it alive. Here, too, as a pastor he found his parish.

An unforgettable gallery of thieves, murderers, saints and sinners shared his cell ‘until each in turn passed through the gap of death.

Voice Of The Christian Martyrs

SERVANTS OF THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

The Voice of the Christian Martyrs is published occasionally as the Lord provides through special offering or donation of concerned Christians.

Our Purposes are based on Hebrews 13: 3

1. To encourage and empower Christians to fulfill the Great Commission in areas of the world where they are persecuted for their involvement in propagating the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We accomplish this by providing Bibles, literature, radio broadcasts, and other forms of aid.

2. To give relief to the families of Christian Martyrs in these areas through out the world.

3. To equip local Christians to win to Christ those persecutors who are opposed to the Gospel in countries where believers are actively persecuted for their Christian Witness.

4. To undertake projects of encouragements, helping believers rebuild their lives and Christians to witness in the countries that have formerly suffered communist oppression.

5. To emphasize the fellowship of all believers by informing the World of the atrocities committed against Christians and remembering their courage and faith.