



Photos above: Nigerian Women giving thanks. How wonderful it was that because of your "work of mercy," the poor women were able to celebrate Christmas with enough food to eat. The hearts of the women were leaping with joy, their mouths filled with laughter, and their tongues burst into songs of praise to God.

## A NEW BEGINNING

BY FR. MARTIN

Whoever wakes up to see another day  
should give thanks to God. -An African Proverb

It's a great blessing to be alive to witness the dawn of 2023 and the fulfillment of the promise that our generous donors and volunteers are bringing through the Society of Bartimaeus. We are grateful to God for your great love, support, and encouragement. As one family, one body in Christ, we share heartaches and joys.

Perseverance: A devout woman whom I met earlier this year faced struggles, setbacks, and loss, but chose to give thanks as she pressed on, trusting in our loving Lord who is preparing her for marvelous things ahead. Another friend with significant health issues lives in the hope of God's healing grace. Another admitted his mistakes resolving never to quit or brood over the past. "I have learned my lessons," he said, "and the Lord has given me another chance.

As pictured above, Nigerians have a beautiful sense of gratitude to all of you and the goodness of God you show to them. They return it with true joy.

At the dawn of the new year, the Lord gives us new grace and new beginning. Our God loves to bless, to heal, and to strengthen us, pouring out His blessings on us every day. This new year, think of how you can be more open to God and let His grace flow into your heart like a spring of living water.

Perhaps the "Y-E-A-R" paradigm may lead you to this life-giving water. This year is God's gift to you.



## Y= Yield to God

The "Yield" sign alerts us to slow down and be attentive to the other traveler. God calls us to slow down, let Him go before us and lead the way. Have we spent the past year resisting God, his voice, his love, his gracious offer to free and heal us? Every day, and every year, the holy hands of the Lord reach down from heaven to save His people, to break the chains that hold us back. Surrender, Yield to Him!

## E- Expect Change

Yielding to God changes our life; the more we yield, the more we become like Christ. No one encounters the Lord in a personal way and stays the same. The Lord changes everything: our values, attitude, thinking, perspective, relationships, and our response to life's trials. Yield to the Lord and watch your life change; you'll become more patient, more loving, more forgiving, more charitable, more peaceful.

## A = Adore Him

We are created to worship our God. It is the path to salvific love. Make a resolution to spend quality time in prayer, adoring the Lord, listening to His promptings. No matter the circumstance, the day will be peaceful, productive and joyful. Our Blessed Mother Mary lived to adore the Lord, "My soul magnifies the Lord..."

## R=Rely on God

Do not rely on your own strength, wisdom, position, worldly power, or possessions. Do depend on God! Every new year calls us to renew our reliance on God, the source of life. God will never disappoint anyone who depends on Him. Mary believed that if we rely on Him, God will "fill the hungry with good things, and raises the lowly."

## The Society of St. Bartimaeus Residential Center

Our Residential home is 50% complete. The roofing has been installed, and soon the exterior and interior finishing will begin. As one of our benefactors remarked, our mission to help those in need is coming true. "Entrust your work to the Lord, and your planning will succeed" (Prov 16:3). We adore our God who is always faithful to His promises. He'll never abandon us. We are very grateful to you, our donors; the Lord has used you to make our vision a reality.

## Completing Vision: Phase 2

The Lord rewards your generosity, and love for the Body of Christ manifest in the blind and the poor that the Society of St. Bartimaeus dedicates its mission to serve. God is renewing our resolve and strength to bring the Center to life. He calls us to listen to his call and respond with charity, service, and love.

## Consider a gift:

Sponsoring and naming a residential saint room for \$2,000. Your contribution will be providing a home and making an impact of a lifetime for these underserved in Nigeria.



Fruits of the  
Society of  
St. Bartimaeus

We, members of the Society of St. Bartimaeus, have yielded to God, and always expect that He will be with us always and bless our "labor of love." He is already doing marvelous things for us and through us, as our organization continues to grow and bring in abundant harvest of blessings to those in need in Nigeria.

Photo: In Nigeria, we are making strides in building the campus to serve God's people through the Society of St. Bartimaeus. It is truly holy ground where each brick laid with love is a masterpiece of the Holy Spirit's work. We ask that you consider the Lord's call to become a part of the SSB through prayer, alms giving and fasting this Lent.



LAND THAT IS HOLY

IN THE SERVICE OF GOD'S CALL TO FEED HIS SHEEP

## SSB Local Events

WORKING TOGETHER  
*Community Awareness*



### St. John's, Florida: SSB Silent Auction/Lunch Presentation

We gathered together to raise awareness of the plight of our brothers and sisters' living in Nigeria. The widespread support, unity and sense of stewardship present was truly life-giving. Our fundraiser educated hearts to see the love of Christ in all those around us.

Great thanks to all of you for your support and leadership.



### St. Augustine, Florida SSB Event with Ovico Art Gallery

This past November, the SSB joined together with St. Augustine's premier contemporary art gallery, OVICO GALLERY, to host a private fundraiser featuring the work of a talented Nigerian artist. Wonderful fellowship was enjoyed with local community.



## Answering the Call

- DR. MARY SOHA

"God has created me to do Him some special service. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told in the next...I have a [part in a great work...]"  
- (John Henry Cardinal Newman)

Each of us is called in different ways- some of us to married life, some to celibate life, some to religious life, some as artists, musicians, engineers, farmers, caregivers, etc. and yet, we are all called to be missionaries- to share our faith and our relationship with Jesus Christ with others. Oftentimes our view of "mission" is very narrow- we think of it as physically and geographically going out into the world.

### How then can we be missionaries and not be called to travel?

St. Thérèse of Lisieux answers this for us. She had a strong missionary spirit and yet was a cloistered nun. She fulfilled both of these callings by responding with insight and love. She couldn't leave her convent but she was very present to the missionaries of her time through countless letters and prayers of support and encouragement. Although she never "stepped foot" on foreign soil, her presence was felt, even after her death. Holy Mother Church, even after her canonization, recognized her as a doctor of the Church and the Patroness of Missionaries. We who have been called to the St. Bartimaeus Society may never "step foot" in Nigeria, yet our Missionary Spirit can propel us to give our prayers and our resources to help others an ocean away. Our willingness to participate in this missionary effort draws us closer, through love, to other children of God, uniting us in Christ.

May St. Thérèse continue to intercede for us in our support of Fr. Martin, all the priests and sisters and lay people who are called to serve the people of Nigeria. Amen.

Dear Friends of the Society of St. Bartimaeus,

It's an honor and joy to serve as the President of The Society of St. Bartimaeus (SSB) and to be entrusted with the responsibility of guiding an organization that was created for the sole purpose of addressing one of humanity's most important missions: To be a conduit of God's love and mercy to the poor—our neighbors in need.

As someone who's spent the better part of my life doing various types of volunteer work, it came as no surprise that I felt this same calling after I relocated from Long Island, New York to St. Augustine, Florida just over a year ago.

In New York, I worked in the publishing industry for 30 years, and later on, switched gears to help organizations in the nonprofit sector. I realized that while the "for profit" and "not for profit" business models were different, the marketing approaches were similar. People buy something if they believed in its value to improve their lives, whereas in the nonprofit sector, people make a donation in order to help improve the lives of others—people they may not know or ever meet. The idea of being a part of something bigger than myself to help change lives for the better was something that touched me deeply.

And so, this is what attracted me to The Society of St. Bartimaeus. The SSB is dedicated to help the underserved blind, disabled and elderly people of Imo state in Nigeria who live in extreme poverty with absolutely no outside resources for help. The SSB recognizes the dignity of each human being and that we are all equal no matter where we live, how old we are, how we look or function and our economic level. Our primary objective is to raise funds to build, open and support a residential community that provides clean water, housing and quality care for these marginalized groups.

In Luke's Gospel, the Good Samaritan helped the victim on the side of the road despite the fact that he was different than him; however, *he couldn't do it alone*. He needed the help of the innkeeper to care for the man after he had to leave. The work of the SSB would not be possible without the help and support of generous souls like you.

We've already accomplished so much and as we move to the next phase of our development, the "Living Stones" project, we continue to rely on your financial support to help us build a residential center that will provide support services to the blind and indigent in the village of Amaokpara Amiri, in Imo state Nigeria.

During these tough economic times, disposable funds are hard to come by, but rest assured, your donations are not going to some big bureaucracy or commission. As unpaid volunteers, 100% of every dollar we raise goes directly to help those in need. No amount given is ever too small.

I ask you for your continued prayers for the successful completion of our work. I'm delighted to work alongside you all to expand the SSB's reach and impact for the people in Nigeria.



That I May See... Mark 10:51

God bless you,  
Linda Inglima

*Linda Inglima*



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