

FOUNDER'S INAUGURAL SPEECH, 28/12/2024:

Enachi Amalla-Egazi,kweenu!, Egali Amalla-Egazikweenu!, Ifroka Amalla-Egazikweenu!,Amalla-Egazi, kwezuonu o o!(“Kweenu” means “Respond to my greetings!”).

1. I welcome everybody here present with an appreciative and thanksgiving heart.

a) The first to be welcomed and thanked is God who in his foresight and providence made it possible for us to gather and be here today. Chukwu dar o o! (God, thank you o-o!).

b) The second to be welcomed are all Amalla people who honored my invitation to be here today: Onyishi Amalla-Egazi and NdiOgbo-Ohaya (the Eldest man in the community and his cabinet), the 3 Traditional Rulers of the town's 3 Autonomous Communities and their Cabinets, the Community Peace-Makers (NdiOdoziObodo), the 2 Parish Priests of the town's 2 parishes and the Chief Priest of the Ezugwu shrine - representing respectively the 2 main religions of our town (Catholic and pagan religions), select-Dignitaries and representative Personalities from Amalla-Egazi: Alan o-o! (Welcome o-o!)

c) The next are my guests from outside Amalla-Egazi: in the first place among them is my Bishop, Most Rev. Professor Godfrey Igwebuike Onah (the Catholic Bishop of Nsukka Diocese), the Chairman Udeni LGA, Aka Eze Aka, the Principals (old and new) Community Secondary School, Amalla (CSSA). Alan o-o!.

d) Finally, I once more welcome everybody here and appreciate your presence. Alan o o!

2. Yes, I invited you all to be my honorable guests today. And the reason for the invitation is simple:I want to make public what I have founded to leave behind as my legacy for Amalla-Egazi in particular and for humanity at large: REV. Fr. Okwudili Ossai Foundation. Founding this Foundation is like planting a fruit-bearing tree and my prayer is that the tree will get more manure and grow to bear more fruits for more people to eat.

Yes, I have done a couple of things for Amalla-Egazi: I saw to it that Amalla got a parish house and a parish priest and two Churches for worship.Since after my priestly ordination in 1981, I have sponsored more than 200 young people in secondary school and University

education; About two years ago, I extended electricity to a village more than two kilometers in distance; I have empowered so many people economically, to name but a few.

But I have done more for other peoples than for my people: Since 1970, I have, as a seminarian and priest, spent most of my life in service to peoples outside Amalla. I have singlehandedly and sometimes in partnership with parishioners built parish houses outside Amalla in my experience and belief that the presence of a Catholic priest in a town or village brings a faster pace of enlightenment and development in those places. And I know what those projects cost me. And I have also sponsored people outside Amalla, even as far as Anambra State, in tertiary schools.

People who are very close to me know and can testify that I think more of other people than of myself – altruistic love fulfills me more than any material possessions. I like being, as much as I can, an extension of God's loving heart and saving hands to people. Now that I am getting older and weaker, I have thought of and have established something intended to be my corporate personality to continue that philanthropic and altruistic love: Rev. Fr. Okwudili Ossai Foundation, as mentioned already.

3. The Foundation is a Charity Foundation in Perpetuity. It is not a Foundation that can cease to exist at any point in time, except if it is not well managed. How is it so? And how can it be so?

a) I have opened an account with the FirstBank of Nigeria Plc. and paid in some amount to serve as a **sacrosanct base capital**. The bank interests it will be yielding will serve as the “cash-in-hand” for the Foundation to carry out some works of charity for the poor and needy in Amalla-Egazi and beyond. The money is from the sweat of my decades of personal altruistic savings and self-denials with nobody to ask me for an account.

b) The sacrosanct base capital is a perpetual investment. It can never decrease but it can always grow with supporting donations from individuals and or groups interested in what the Foundation is doing. The Foundation is not there to BEG for money but there to use what it gets from her investment and from voluntary donations to fulfill its mission and objectives.

4. The Foundation shall kick-start its operation in January 2025, focusing on her two main specific and well defined works of charity:

- a. **Helping indigent but intelligent and talented children and young people through scholarship programs to acquire formal education and skills for self-reliance in life.**
- b. **Empowering indigent but capable and reliable people for self-sustaining businesses through guaranteed and appreciable non-interest loan-schemes.**

The first of the above two specific works of charity takes priority over the second. As such, from January 2025, there will be a *free secondary school education* for Amalla-Egazi indigenes in all the classes in our Community Secondary School, Amalla,(CSSA) in which school fees are demanded.

The operation will be simple: the Principal of CSSA is to submit at the beginning of every academic year a verifiable list of Amalla indigenes in the various classes of the school (For the current academic year 2024-25, the total number is 420). He submits at the beginning of every term the total amount of their collective school fees. The Foundation pays and monitors in collaboration with the school the regularity of the attendance to classes by the registered students. To checkmate payments for school dropouts, the number of the registered students in each class is to be reconfirmed before payments are made. Parents are to refund the term's payments made for their children who on their own drop out of the school.

NB1. If at any time, the bank's interest rate on the base capital drops or there is a hike on the secondary school fees or there is a surge in the number of children wanting secondary school education such that the Foundation's cash in hand can no longer carry the financial load of the universal free secondary school education scholarships, the Foundation shall inform the Principal of the secondary school with facts and figures and in collaboration with him/her and following a justifiably objective principle do what it can within the limits of its resources.

NB2. Should it happen that the Government declares a universal free secondary school education, the fund for secondary school students shall be used for University education, handwork apprenticeships, the second objective of the Foundation, and for any other works of charity the Foundation may decide to undertake.

NB3. The restriction of the scholarship to the students of the CSSA is to promote the school and to attract and increase the responsible and caring attention of our community, Amalla, to the

school. To buttress this point, Amalla-Egazi as a community should form a strong committee to monitor and report to appropriate authorities anything observed on the part of the school authorities (e.g. teachers not doing their job) or on the part of the students (e.g. students not going or going late to school) which is or could be detrimental to the school being what it should be or to the realization of the scholarships objectives. The members of the Foundation's Trustees shall be ex-officio members of the Committee that will be working hand-in-hand with the school.

The monitoring Committee in collaboration with the school shall come up with a code of conduct the obedience to which will guarantee the retention of the scholarship and a breach of which will mean the loss of the scholarship for a student. That will surely help checkmate indiscipline and promote seriousness and academic industry.

5. Scholarships for University education based on established criteria will also be given depending on the available cash in hand. Young people talented in hand-work will also in the same condition be sponsored in corresponding schools/apprenticeship.

6. If there is a credit balance after paying for the above-mentioned and defined scholarships, it will be used for the second objective of the Foundation and for any other works of charity as much as possible. But for now, we are beginning with and focusing on the first objective.

7. If and as the Foundation hopefully grows, the Trustees shall organize it for easier running and accounting. For example, we can have such arms as Fr. Okwudili Ossai Foundation: school and skills acquisition dept.; Fr. Okwudili Ossai Foundation: Economic empowerment dept.; Fr. Okwudili Ossai Foundation: Healthcare dept.; etc.

8. The Foundation will be run by me and the other members of the Board of Trustees selected from the group called Fr. Ossai's Children (those I have helped to stand on their two feet in life). After my death or in the case of my incapacitation, the Foundation will be run by the Trustees and their subsequent successors. I pray and hope that this investment will not go the disappointing way that the 3 water tanks I built for Amalla, the water tanker I gave to Amalla, (both of which I handed to Amalla to manage) and the medical center I built for Amalla (and handed over to the Church in Amalla to manage) went. The Foundation has already a Website with the link: www.revffrossaifoundation.org

9. I thank God for giving me the opportunity to so far prepare for my death and pray him to be with and work through the Foundation for the good of Amalla-Egazi and beyond.

10. Donations to the Foundation from individuals, groups, companies etc. interested in what the Foundation is doing are and will always be accepted and appreciated. Such donations will increase the base capital of the Foundation, increase the bank interests and thereby strengthen the hands of the Trustees in doing more works of charity. One can always visit our website to know how to make such supporting donations or call me or any member of the Trustees for any donation, financial or otherwise. Donors should rest assured of a share in the divine rewards and blessings coming through the good works of the Foundation. My/our God is an unfailing REWARDER! My Bishop has given his understanding and his good wishes for today's event.

11. It should also be made public that the Foundation is legally accountable to the Government through the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) at the end of every fiscal year. It is also in the interest of Amalla to know that the Government has the constitutional right to shut down the Foundation and confiscate its funds and properties if it is not run according to its legal Constitution and Articles of Association. I don't foresee that happening as the Foundation will be open and transparent having nothing to hide in its dealings and operations.

12. I have three appeals to make:

1) To Amalla-Egazi people, I say in the words of Jesus Christ: Love one another as I have loved you (John 13:34);

2) Again to Amalla-Egazi, I say: I know that you pray for me to live long for you in good health. I thank you for that! And I request you to pray also for these young boys and girls I am building up, inter alia, to be my prolongation after my death. Don't do any evil to anyone of them! You don't know what any one of them will be for you tomorrow just as nobody knew that I would be what I am to you today. They unanimously supported the idea of this Foundation and have promised to keep it alive after my death and some of them are already contributing to its growth for the good of Amalla-Egazi. Just a few days ago three of them made donations: the first, one Million Naira (N1000, 000.00), the second, five hundred thousand Naira (N500,000.00), and the third, three hundred thousand Naira (N300, 000.00). An applause for them please!

3) My third appeal is to all beneficiaries of my works of charity (past, present, and future), to them I say: Help the poor and the needy as I have helped you. You received without payment; give without payment (Mat. 10:8).

I thank once again all who have been supportive, cooperative, and collaborative in the journey that has brought us this far. May God reward all of you abundantly in his own way!

13. Long live Rev. Okwudili Ossai Foundation! Let this Foundation as my philanthropic legacy last and live perpetually as I prayerfully intend it! As long as I live and can, I will always be available for the good of Amalla as I am for the Church and for humanity at large. And to God be all thanksgiving and glory through Christ our Lord!

14. Believing that the essentials of all that one needs to know about the Foundation have been synoptically and succinctly articulated in this speech, I thank you all once again very much for your presence and audience. I can at this juncture take some questions/comments, if any.