

## **My Secondary School experiences in Zaria**

When I came to Zaria for my Senior Secondary School, I started my first term at Redemption College Zaria. Redemption College is the school that changed my life due to the teachers and friends I came in contact with and who impacted a new lifestyle into me. When I was in the village, the habit of reading my books was not part of me, and I did it only during the examination periods. But when I came to Redemption College, I developed the habit of reading whether there was an exam or not, which made me to have some knowledge on the topics even before the teachers taught them in the class. During my first and second term, life was changing smoothly from village to city life. But unfortunately, during the second term holiday in 2011, something happened: Because of the ongoing presidential election that took place at that time, a crisis developed in some parts of northern Nigeria, during which some people broke into the school and burnt down everything in the school, as well as other schools and houses in the neighbourhood. Seeing that all the teaching equipment was destroyed, the Swiss sponsors decided to change the school for us, and they transferred us to St. Bartholomew's school at Wusasa, Zaria, so that we could continue with the third term session there.

St. Bartholomew's school is a seminary school which is very popular among many students from all parts of Nigeria and also from some neighbouring countries. So we had to learn how to adapt to the environment and the learning process in the school. All the friends and teachers we had in Redemption College were no longer the ones we were staying with. It was just like starting a new life all over again. The teachers in St. Bartholomew's school are really trying their best to see that they impact knowledge into the students like the teachers in Redemption College. But the difference is the attitude of the students towards studies. In Redemption College, I was not brought up to condone exam malpractice but when I came to St. Bartholomew's school, I realised that it was practiced by almost all the students during tests and exams. Despite that, I never joined the crowd because there is a saying going like this: „It's better to fail with honour than to pass with cheating.“ This I took to be my code of conduct towards my studies.

During the last two years in Zaria, I have come to realise that for you to succeed in life, you have to avoid joining the crowd. The crowd you join can put you in trouble and leave you there without a helper. Many students in St. Bartholomew's school have put their friends into deep trouble which they can't get rid off because of the gravity of the offence. Some of them lead to suspension and some even to expulsion. But I thank God for the friends I have who are friends indeed because they can never engage themselves in anything that will bring problems to the school management and themselves, and, by extension, to me. The most special friend I have among all the friends is Francisca Kumi who is a good friend indeed because in any circumstance she is a helper both spiritually and academically. Each time we are having problems we sit down together and advice each other in order to be out of the trouble. We also pray and hand everything over to our maker. Francisca is the friend that I will never forget and now we are going to depart due to her going back to her country Ghana, where she will continue her studies at higher institution.

Life in Zaria is totally different from life in the village. Due to the kind of people I came in contact with staying in the hostel has made me to understand and learn many people's hobbies and behaviours. Francisca is my main light in the city because she is the one that exposed me to know how to come close to people that I know are qualified to be good fellows. She made me to realize that if you continue to live your life in the village you are in total darkness. Because even if you want to achieve something good for your life, but need help from somebody to do so, you will not have the courage to go and ask that person because of fear. Also, if you are in the village and somebody will try to bring change to your life in order to make you civilized, you may misunderstand his intention, due to the illiteracy of the people.

As the plan for every reasonable person should be, I also want to choose a course to study at a higher institution. Initially, I planned to read medicine and surgery as my courses in university. But due to the dynamic nature of life and the situation at Ahmadu Bello University, which is not admitting any medicine students at the moment, I had to change my plans. So I decided to apply for biochemistry in my JAMB test. We went to the registration on the 8th of December 2012. Or, as an alternative, I would also like to apply for nursing in any nursing school in Zaria, due to the interest I have. May God help us and grant us the admission and the passing of the examination.

I want to conclude by saying a word of appreciation and gratitude to the Swiss sponsors who, due to their efforts towards our studies, made it possible for us to go to Secondary School in Zaria and to apply for admission into higher institution. This is an opportunity that thousands of people are looking for but they don't get the chance. But it was granted to me, and there are no words in this world I can use to express my appreciation and gratitude, only „THANK YOU, THANK YOU!“ May God help us to achieve what he want to achieve, Amen.