

April 3, 2017

Pastor Ifeoma Chiemeka

Head of Administration

BLW Inc.

Dear Pastor,

RE: MY PENDING AND LINGERING CASE AT ICM4C

Warm greetings in Jesus Name.

I respectfully write to bring to your attention a matter concerning me and Pastor Kaycee which has been lingering at the Inner City Mission for Children (ICM4C) for over two months and which has kept me at home since then because the Director Pastor Omoh told me she had referred the matter to you and that I should wait at home until you look into it and take a decision on my posting.

Background

On 25th January, I received an email from Pastor Kaycee Head of Operations, officially notifying me of my transfer to the School Pastoral Care Unit to function as the Pastoral Care Coordinator with effect from the date of the mail, 25th January 2017.

I found this transfer shocking and I wrote a protest letter to the Director Pastor Omoh objecting to the transfer and explaining my reasons for my objecting.

My letter is self-explanatory and I reproduce it hereunder for your perusal.

MY PROTEST LETTER TO PASTOR OMO

January 26, 2017

Pastor Omoh Alabi

The Director

Inner City Mission for Children

Dear Pastor,

I am constrained to write to you at this time to bring to your attention certain matters which I find very disturbing in the course of my work as a staff member of the Inner City Mission for Children. These matters, I believe, also border on the image and integrity of the Department and the church as a whole. These issues have been bothering me and affecting my morale and sanity. I also know that many other members of staff feel the same way as I do, but very few will find the courage to speak up.

Let me start with a letter I received from Pastor Kaycee Kanu, Head of Operations dated January 25, 2017 (**Please, find a copy of the letter herewith attached**). The letter notified me of my 'transfer to the **School Pastoral Care Unit** to function as the **Pastoral Care Coordinator**'. This transfer took effect from the same day, 25th January 2017 that I was notified. Attached to the letter was also the 'Terms of Reference' covering my new tasks. The letter further stated that I was 'expected to report to the Head of School, **Sister Vanessa Nosebge**, who will further furnish me with the details of my new assignment.

Ma, this would be the third time that I have been transferred from one office to another within a short span of time. My first transfer was on October 20, 2016 based on my own request to be transferred. I was transferred to the **Partnership Unit** under **Deaconess Titi Oluremekun**. I worked without stress with my Supervisor, Deaconess Titi who routinely sent me on errands to the Zones under her. I was so committed to my job that I was making calls to Pastors and Partnership Representatives using my own airtime. Sometimes, when I ran out of airtime I also used my Supervisor's phone to make the calls. If my supervisor had any concerns regarding my performance in this

unit, she did not express such concerns to me. She encouraged me knowing that I was new in the job. I continued to work according to her instructions and humbly carried out all the tasks she assigned to me. I was therefore shocked when Pastor Kaycee sent me a text message dated December 3, 2016 at 11.14 am in which he said: ***'U need to sit in ur work. I got ur appraisal yesterday and it wasn't good.'*** Knowing that my supervisor never complained or spoke to me concerning my performance, my initial thought was to go to see Pastor Kaycee to inquire from him the source of his information about my appraisal but I did not do that because I was not comfortable going to his office for a reason I will disclose shortly. In the first place, I have not been appraised in my new unit. I wondered then, where Pastor Kaycee saw or read my appraisal report. Till date, my supervisor has not told me anything about my performance.

Then, on January 3, 2017 I received yet another letter reassigning me to the **Media Sub-Department** to function as the **Media Librarian**. The transfer took effect from 3rd January 2017. I was also directed to report to the Media Manager, **Deaconess Titi Oluremekun**, who will further furnish me with the details of my new assignment.

While in this new place, I have discharged my duties diligently while also continuing to go to the zones under the instruction of my supervisor, Deaconess Titi. I was trained for one week on archiving of videos and photos and this training has improved my capacity to discharge my duties. I send my daily reports without default.

I was therefore, shocked when I received Pastor Kaycee's latest mail reassigning me back to the same school from where he facilitated my reassignment.

My concern with this particular transfer is that Pastor Kaycee has just sent me back to the same school and under the same Supervisors from whom I sought transfer due to reasons bordering on my health and on other issues I discussed privately with him as the HR. I find it strange, therefore, that Pastor Kaycee could, knowing the reasons I sought the transfer in the first place, and also knowing the consequences of returning me to the same office which I felt a lot of relief leaving, he could still go ahead to return me to that same office under the same oppressive Supervisors.

When I resumed work at the Inner City three years ago (on January 6, 2014), I was assigned the duty of a teacher in school. I worked with **Sister Betty Odumu** as my supervisor and **Sister Vanessa Nosegbe** as Head of School. During my period of stay in that unit, life was hell for me due to the oppressive behavior of my two Supervisors above-mentioned. They addressed and treated me in manners that dehumanize and lower self-esteem. They exhibited hatred and malice against me. On one occasion, Sister Betty told lies against me of not taking care of the children, and on that basis, issued me a query. When I responded to the query and debunked her lies with facts which indicted her, she asked me to re-write my response and write what she dictated for me, but I refused. She did not take any further action. At some point both Supervisors stopped responding to my greetings. Sister Betty also said she doesn't like me. I was frustrated and developed persistent headache and stress. Under them, I went home every day feeling depressed and feeling anxious and tensed each morning when I remember that I have to go to work to face these two tormentors. They

complained about everything- from my makeup, to my dressing, to virtually everything about me.

It was against this background that I complained to Pastor Kaycee as HR concerning my constant health challenge. I also narrated to him my ordeal and asked for a transfer out of the school.

Now, concerning why Pastor Kaycee could send me the strange text message complaining about my 'appraisal, and for his curious decision to transfer me back to the same hostile environment where he facilitated my transfer from, knowing the hell I was passing through. I can easily figure this out.

From the moment I was transferred to Partnership, Pastor Kaycee started asking me to 'settle' him for facilitating my transfer. Initially, I thought the Pastor was joking. But when he became persistent I became worried and felt scandalized, knowing that he is a Pastor. He frequently came to my office, pressuring and asking me to sleep out with him, but I continued to politely turn him down. It was when he realized that I was not yielding to his illicit and unbecoming propositions that he sent me that text. I also believe that it was for the same reason - punishment for my refusal to 'settle' him that he 're-assigned' me back to the same unit where he knew I was being maltreated and victimized.

Ma, what I have outlined in this letter is not peculiar to me. There's a lot of grumbling among staff who feel oppressed by the highhandedness with which their superiors treat them. There is the need for the management to pay attention to the relationship among staff, especially between staff and their supervisors so as to ensure that people entrusted with power and authority use them justly and fairly. Many staff feel frustrated by the oppressive behavior of their superiors who abuse and misuse power. Threats, victimization and oppressive use of power by superiors and a feeling of helplessness by those who feel oppressed dampen morale and undermine effectiveness and dedication. On some occasions staff members who complain are reminded that they are still on probation and that they can be dealt with during appraisal which will affect their promotion.

Ma, also please look into the case of sexual harassment of female staff members and guarantee their protection from sexual harassment and exploitation.

Finally, I hereby humbly request that you kindly look into my transfer back to school with a view to reversing it. I will be more comfortable to resign than going back to work with supervisors who have expressed their hatred for me.

Yours faithfully,

Sister Brenda Nwanguma

Ma, I was still awaiting the response of Pastor Omoh to my above-mentioned letter, when I received yet another mail from Pastor Kaycee dated January 31, 2017.

He wrote:

Dear Sister Brenda,

Warm greetings in Christ precious name

RE: UNAUTHORIZED ABSENCE FOR 4 WORKING DAYS

I write regarding your absence at work with no advance notice from **26th January till Date.** During this period, you made no contact with the Department to explain your absence for 4 days.

Be informed that the Department takes a very serious view of the situation; absence without a good cause and advance notification is considered gross misconduct.

Based on Ministry Policy on Unauthorised Absence:

- a) A Staff who is absent from work without permission, shall be deemed to have voluntarily left his assignment, **thereby forfeiting all rights to pay for the period of such absence.**
- b) Cases of absence without authorization exceeding **five [5] working days would be considered as Job Abandonment and be treated as such.**

You are required to contact your Line Manager copying HR before the close of business today, 31st January; otherwise, your absence would be treated as Job Abandonment from tomorrow, 1st February.

Please do acknowledge receipt

Thank you

Pastor Kaycee Kanu

In my response, I wrote the following to Pastor kaycee:

Dear Pastor Kaycee

Reference your letter to me today January 31st 2017
Re- UNAUTHRISED ABSENCE

I have already written a protest letter to the Director Pastor Omoh in response to your mail to me on January 25th 2017 re assigning me to school.

I will await her response before i determine whether I'll resume work or not.

Thanks

Sister Brenda Nwanguma

Then, Pastor Omoh, who had not responded to my earlier protest letter addressed to her waded in and wrote:

Dear Sister Brenda

Warm greetings in Jesus Name.

You are not permitted to respond in this manner to an official mail that you received from the Head of HR.

Please withdraw this email immediately.

You should know that notice on restructuring and reassignment will not be sent without due approvals

If you are not willing to resume at your new assigned role. Please indicate clearly so that necessary administrative follow process be applied.

Keeping away from the office as you have done is considered as Absentism and Work Abandonment which has due implications.

Pastor Omoh.

I then wrote her a second letter, reproduced hereunder.

Dear Pastor Omoh,

Now that you have eventually responded, it's easier for me to take a decision one way or the other.

First I'm shocked that you are yet to acknowledge, let alone, respond to my complaint to you, in response to Pastor Kaycee's mail redeploying me. I raised grave issues which ought to be of serious concern concerning Pastor Kaycee's conduct as well as

oppressive and malicious exercise of power by him and others, and it was my expectation that you'd be outraged by those scandalous revelations.

I'm also shocked that you're asking me to withdraw my mail in response to Pastor Kaycee's subsequent mail to me, copying you this time. In my mail I only explained to him why I kept away from the office after my redeployment back to School.

I'm as well surprised that you have not expressed worry about the grave allegations of sexual immorality, harassment and oppressive use of power by some senior management and supervisory staff at inner City Mission for Children, which were contained in my mail to you.

The least I expected from you, as a Pastor, and an administrator in a mission school was to investigate those allegations and if found to be true, would go against the ethos and values of the school and the vision of its founder.

Well, it's clear to me now that you can't guarantee me protection and justice. I can't continue to work in an oppressive work environment where superiors vindictively and maliciously exercise power and where there is no protection for the victimized subordinates.

Now that I know I can't get justice from you, I'll go higher up, beyond you to seek justice.

In the event that I end up no longer working at Inner city, I believe I have an obligation- consistent with what our Pastor teaches us, to expose wrongdoings and ungodly conducts being apparently condoned and covered up in such an otherwise, sacred place, so that they can be addressed and brought to an end.

If my only contribution is to have helped restore sanity and righteousness at the Inner City, in line with the vision of our man of God whom God used to establish the school, to help indigent children, then, I'll be fulfilled.

Sister Brenda Nwanguma

After this letter, which I copied Pastor Kaycee, I began to receive persistent phone calls from Brother Charles Osakwe (also of ICM4C) who asked why I sent such a mail to the Director and advised me to withdraw it and apologise for the tone and then come and see the Director. Brother Charles further told me that Pastor Omoh had previously

been receiving emails from anonymous sources threatening her and that the tone and language I used in my letters were similar and that she strongly suspects I had been the one sending her those anonymous mails. I quickly told him that I did not understand what he was saying and that I wrote my mail using my identity and based on stated facts. I wrote to the Director, apologizing for the tone and language but urged her to look in to the substance of my letter.

My letter of apology is reproduced hereunder.

Dear Pastor,
Good morning Ma, and I hope this mail meets you well.

I write to sincerely apologise to you for the tone and language of my mail to you.

I however, humbly request that you kindly look into my complaints as stated in my mail.

Thank you Ma, and God bless you.

Sister Brenda Nwanguma.

After this apology, I went to see Pastor Omoh in her office. As soon as she saw me, she flared at me asking if I was the one who wrote her 'that nasty letter' and told me that since I threatened to go to higher authority, I should go to that higher authority. She refused to listen to me and walked away. I waited for her until she returned to her office and when she saw me again, she ordered me out, and ordered that I should not be allowed in. She re-echoed what Brother Charles earlier told me accusing me of being the one who had been 'threatening' her all this while using anonymous mails. I was shocked at this because I had no idea and still have not understood what she was talking about. I haven't written any mail to her before this time and don't know anything about any mail that anyone may have written to her anonymously in the past. I tried to explain this to her but she persistently refused to give me attention.

While I was sitting outside still waiting to see her, Pastor Kaycee walked into her office and then came out shortly to meet me where I was sitting and told me how upset Pastor Omoh was with me because of my mail to her. He then asked me why I wanted to put him in trouble by talking about sexual harassment, and asked me to go

and withdraw the letter. He begged me not to further talk about the sexual harassment and that I should go for now. I didn't respond to him. I still waited until close of work when Pastor Omoh came out from her office and I still followed her to her car and requested if I could chat with her on Kings Chat and she agreed.

The next day, I opened up a conversation with her on Kings Chat and apologized again for the tone and language of my letters to her and still told her how strongly I felt about the issues I raised in my mails. She now forwarded back my last mail to her and asked me to explain paragraph by paragraph what I meant. I started explaining from paragraph one and she then asked me to come the next day to see her.

The next day I went to her office and she told me she reacted angrily the way she did because she did not see my first mail and that if she had seen it she would have responded accordingly. She now told me that she was the one who ordered my transfer and I tried again to explain to her why I cannot go back to work under Sister Vanessa Nosegbe. I reiterated to her the much untold experience I went through working under her which Pastor Kaycee knew very well about and facilitated my transfer. She said it was Sister Vanessa who recommended that I be brought back to work under her.

After this, she told me she was going to take up my complaints with higher authorities and asked me to forward to him my conversation (on Whatsapp) with Pastor Kaycee which I did.

I then asked her if I should return to my previous post pending the determination of my complaint and she said I should 'hold on for now until you are called by higher authority who will then decide where you would be posted to'.

After sometime when I have not heard anything from any authority, I chatted her again and informed her that I have not been called by the authority and she said, to my surprise, that I should go back to the same place I complained that I wasn't comfortable going back to.

Up to this moment, I have neither heard from her again, nor from the higher authority. I have also not been paid my salaries for February and March, even though I did not opt to stay away from work. Pastor Omoh asked me to wait until I am called by higher authority.

I have since then been receiving calls from fellow staff members inquiring about the status of this case. I don't know what to answer except that I am waiting to be called by higher authority. A few of those who have called me have also revealed to me how Sister Vanessa has continued to threaten to deal with me if I come back.

I have discussed this issue with my local Pastor (Pastor David Agundu, CEC Okunola) who brought the matter to the knowledge of my Group Pastor (Pastor Nelson Agbonifo of Dopemu 1, Zone 2), who promised that he would look into the matter and revert. My local Pastor later informed me that the Group Pastor said he was informed that higher authority 'have taken the matter up'.

By tomorrow (April 4, 2017) it would be exactly two months since this matter started and since Pastor Omoh said higher authority had taken the matter up and would call me. I am yet to be called and this is why I have decided to bring this to your attention.

I hereby humbly and respectfully request that you look into this matter and let it be resolved one way or the other so that I may know my fate.

Thank you Ma.

Yours in Christ,

Sister Brenda Nwanguma