



REQUIEM MASS FOR
Hon. Justice Umegbolu Emmanuel Okoye
Nri-Ezedi (Ogbunechendo Nri)
Chief Judge (Emeritus), Anambra State, Nigeria
January 2, 1943 – March 8, 2025

St. James Catholic Church
1000 GA-155 N, McDonough, GA 30252
Friday, May 2nd 2025



THE JUDICIARY

A Life of Purpose and Principle

Hon. Justice Umegbolu Emmanuel Okoye Nri-Ezedi (Ogbunechendo)

Chief Judge (Emeritus), Anambra State

January 2, 1943 – March 8, 2025

Born into the noble household of Late Chief Nwokoye Anene Nri-Ezedi (Enyivuaku) and wife, Late Mrs. Chinwe Nri-Ezedi (Appeal) in Uruoji Village in the ancient Nri kingdom, Umegbolu Emmanuel Okoye was destined for greatness. From a young age, his brilliance, discipline, and quiet determination stood out. With the support of his beloved uncle, Late Mr. Donald Igwebudu Nri-Ezedi, he pursued a rigorous academic path that led him from Christ the King College, Onitsha, to the University of London, where he earned his LL.B and LL.M degrees. He was called to both the English and Nigerian Bars.

His distinguished legal career was marked by integrity, courage, and an unwavering commitment to justice. As the first Nri man to become a High Court Judge—and later, Chief Judge of Anambra State—he presided over landmark cases, most notably the impeachment case of Governor Peter Obi, where he stood firm against pressure and preserved the rule of law.

Beyond the bench, he was a man of strong values—disciplined, principled, and compassionate. He often said, “*There is no failure in hard work,*” and he lived by it. He raised his children to pursue excellence, self-reliance, and integrity. His generosity extended beyond his home, touching lives quietly and purposefully.

At the center of his life was the quiet, unwavering love he shared with his dear wife of over 54 years, Lady Constance “Connie” Nri-Ezedi. Together, they were blessed with six children. Theirs was a love that began in childhood, blossomed across oceans, and grew stronger through every season of life. Side by side, they nurtured a family grounded in faith, guided by the gift of education, and wrapped in the warmth of enduring love.



In 2022, he was honored with the revered Ozo title *Ogbunechendo*—“the expansive tree that shelters many.” A fitting name for a man who stood tall with humility and strength, providing cover, counsel, and care to all who came under his shade.

He transitioned peacefully on March 8, 2025, surrounded by his family, physically and virtually. Though deeply missed, his legacy lives on—in the justice he upheld, the lives he shaped, and the love he gave so fully.

Hon. Justice Emeka Samuel Nri-Ezedi. (Son)
FOR THE FAMILY

Opening Prayer

Almighty God our Father, we firmly believe that your son died and rose to life. We pray for Umegbolu Emmanuel who died in Christ. Raise him at the last day to share the glory of the risen Christ who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit one God forever and ever, Amen.

Penitential Act

I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God

Onye Nwe Anyi Mee Ebere (Lord Have Mercy)

Onye nwe anyi mee, Onye nwe anyi mee ebere (twice)

Mee ehe ehe ehe ebere – m --mmm

Mee ehe ehe ehe ebere - m –mmmmm

Kristi mee, O Kristi mee ebere (twice)

Mee ehe ehe ehe ebere –m--mmm

Mee ehe ehe ehe ebere --m –mmmmm

Onye nwe anyi mee, Onye nwe anyi mee ebere (twice)

Mee ehe ehe ehe ebere – m --mmm

Mee ehe ehe ehe ebere - m --mmmmm

First Reading

A reading from the book of Wisdom (3:1-9)

The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be a disaster, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of others they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself; like gold in the furnace, he tried them, and like a sacrificial burnt offering he accepted them. In the time of their visitation they will shine forth, and will run like sparks through the stubble. They will govern nations and rule over peoples, and the Lord will reign over them forever. Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his holy ones, and he watches over his elect.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm.**Psalm 23 – My Shepherd Is the Lord. (#740)**

Refrain: *My shepherd is the Lord, nothing indeed shall I want.*

1. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose. Near restful waters he leads me, to revive my drooping spirit.
2. He guides me along the right path, he is true to his name. If I should walk in the valley of darkness no evil would, I fear. You are there with Your crook and Your staff; with these You give me comfort.
3. You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my foes. My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing.
4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life. In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever.
5. To the Father and Son give glory, give glory to the spirit. To God who is, who was, and who will be for ever and ever.

Second Reading

A reading from the book of Revelations, 21:1-5a, 6b-7

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children."

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Reading Before The Gospel**John 6:40**

This is the will of my father, says the Lord, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him on the last day.

The Gospel

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 6:37-40

Jesus said to the crowd: "Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and I will not reject anyone who comes to me, because I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me. And this is the will of the one who sent me, that I should not lose anything of what he gave me, but that I should raise it on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him on the last day."

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to You, Lord Jesus Christ

Prayer of the Faithful

Let us pray with faith and confidence to God our father who lives forever and who can do all things. As he raised His son Jesus Christ from the dead, so may He give peace and salvation to both the living and the dead.

1. For Justice Umegbolu Emmanuel Okoye: that he may share the light of Christ's resurrection, come into new Life of happiness and peace. (R)
2. For God's mercy and compassion that He may forgive Justice Umegbolu Emmanuel Okoye, any sins he committed through human frailty. (R).
3. For those to whom this world is the be- all and end-all; that they may come to believe the good news of salvation, renew their Lives and have faith in Christ who is the Way, the Truth and the Life. (R)
4. For those suffering on account of bereavement, that generosity of their fellow Christians may give them new function and help them to relieve their anxiety. (R)
5. For Justice Umegbolu Emmanuel Okoye, 's wife, children and grand children: Father, we humbly ask for Your heavenly grace upon them, especially the wife whom he left behind. Grant them the strength to navigate the difficult days ahead. Let Your love be their rock and refuge. (R)
6. For all those who gathered here to pray for Justice Umegbolu Emmanuel Okoye, that we may live, act and speak in full realization that one day we shall be called upon to answer for our thoughts, words and actions. (R)
7. For the sick and the suffering, that Jesus Christ who showed mercy to the infirm and the trouble may show them His bounteous mercy, bestow upon them every heavenly blessing and restore to them lasting health of mind and body. (R)
8. For those who have departed from this life that our Lord Jesus to whom it belongs to grant mercy and to spare, may remit their sins and welcome them into his kingdom of peace and glory. (R)

Let Us Pray

O Lord may these humble petitions find favor in your presence for the salvation of late Justice Umegbolu Emmanuel Okoye, your son and all who have died in Christ who is Lord forever. Amen

Prayer Over for Gifts

Lord, receive the gifts we offer for the salvation of your servant Justice Umegbolu Emmanuel Okoye. May Christ be merciful in judging him for his belief in Christ as his Lord and Savior. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Communion Antiphon

May eternal light shine upon them, O Lord, with your saints forever because you are merciful. Eternal rest grant to them, O Lord; and let perpetual light shine upon them.

Prayer After Communion.

Lord God, your Son Jesus Christ gave us the sacrament of his body and blood to guide us on our pilgrim way to your kingdom. May Justice Umegbolu Emmanuel Okoye, who shared in the Eucharist come to the banquet of life Christ has prepared for us. Through Christ our Lord.





Eze Igwe

Chorus:

Eze igwe Chukwu, meghe ya uzo nk'igwe.

Ala oma Nn'anyi, Ala oma Nn'anyi.

Ala mara mma ala Chukwu meghe ya uzo
nke'igwe

1. Eze igwe, Chukwu igwe, meghe uzo, meghe ya uzo nk'igwe
2. Ala oma nk'inyere Isreal, Nke inyere ya, meghe ya uzo nk'igwe
3. Eze kere ala, kee igwe, meghe anyi uzo nk'gwe.
4. Anyi ekele ngi O Chukwu, ala oma nke inyere anyi, meghe anyi uzo nk'gwe.

Blessed Assurance

Chorus:

This is my story; this is my song. Praising my Savior all the day long, This is my story, this is my song, Praising my savior all the day long.

1. Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine Oh! What a foretaste of glory divine. Heir of salvation purchase of God. Born of the spirit, washed in his blood.
2. Perfect Submission, perfect delight. Visions of rapture burst on my side. Angels descending bring from above. Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.
3. Perfect Submission, all is at rest I in my savior am happy and blessed. Watching and waiting, looking above Filled with his goodness lost in his love.

It's Payback Time

1. I believe that Jesus died for me. A sacrifice beyond my understanding. Offering him self in place of me. O! How can I repay the Lord?

Chorus:

Father to you we offer (oh)! Jesus to you this gift

we bring Holy Ghost accept this offering .Which we offer up to you.

2. I believe all that the scripture said About the love beyond my understanding For giveness beyond comprehension O! How can I repay the Lord?
3. Teach me lord to love you as I ought O! Teach me lord to love you all my lifetime . Spreading love wherever I find myself. O! How can I repay the Lord?

What a Friend We Have In Jesus

1. What a friend we have in Jesus. All our sins and grieves to bear. What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer! O what peace we often forfeit. O what need less pain we bear, All because we do not carry . Everything to God in prayer!
2. Have we trials and temptation Is there trouble anywhere? We should never be discouraged Take it to the Lord in prayer Can we find a friend so faithful? Who will all our sorrows share? Jesus knows our every weakness Take it to the Lord in prayer.
3. Are we weak and heavy laden Cumbered with a load of care? Jesus only is our refuge Take it to the Lord in prayer Do thy friends despise, forsake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer In His arms He'll take and shield thee; Thou will find a solace there



Chetanu Ubochi Onwu

Chorus:

O Jesu melu ya ebere. O Jesu melu ya ebere
Biko Jesu melu ya ebere. Ezigbo Jesu melu ya ebere

1. Chetanu ubochi onwu, Nke ga-adiri mma-du. Na ike nke ga akara unu. Ugwo diri ndu unu.
2. Anyi di ndu na ututu. Nwuru anwu na anyasi. Dika ahihia na ime ohia. Madu ji mma mata
3. Unu bu ndi ome njo. Ji ngara garube. Kwusinu na ihu ozu. Nedu ihe unu gaabu
4. Ndukwu mmadu na ututu. Ozu na uhuru chi. Eze nke madu nile. Ihe oriri ahuhu
5. Unu ga-ahapu ego. Aku na ihe ekike. Ihe nke ga-abara unu. Bu soso ezi-omume
6. Ikpe nke ga-adiri unu. Bu ikpe nke kwuru oto. Eluigwe nke ga-abu ugwo. Na oku nke diri njo.

God of Mercy

Chorus:

Jesus, Lord I ask for mercy Let me not implore in vain
All my sins I now detest them Never will I sin again

1. God of mercy and compassion Look with pity upon me
Father let me call the father 'Tis your child returns to thee.
2. By my sin I have deserved death And endless misery.
Hell with all its pains and torments. And for all eternity.
3. By my sins I have abandoned Right and claim to heaven above
Where the saints rejoice for ever In a boundless sea of love.
4. See our savior, bleeding, dying On the cross of Calvary
To that cross my sins have nailed Him He bleeds and dies for me.

So Otu Ihe Ka M Na-Ario

Chorus:

So otu ihe ka m na ario na aka Dinwenum,
Dinwenum --- Ka m biri Ka m biri n'ulo nke
Dinwenum N'mbosi n'dun nine

1. Dinwenum m bu ihe n'nzopotam, Onye ka mgaa atu egwu
Dinwenum bu ebe mgbaba m, Onye g eyi m egwu
2. Oga ezobam na ebe obibi ya, Mbosi ogbaghara m
Oga ezobem n'ime mkpukpu ya, Kwuba sie m ike na mkpume.
3. Agam e-were obi anuri, Na achu aja n'ulo Dinwenum.
Agam ekwe ukwe anuri ye Dinwenum.
4. Otito diri NN ana Nwa, na Munso Na uwatu uwa niile.

When Peace Like a River Attendeth

Refrain: It is well with my soul, it is well; it is well with my soul

1. When peace like a river attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll Whatever my lot,
thou hast taught me to say "It is well; it is well with by soul.
2. Though Satan should buffet, tho' trials should come.
Let this blest assurance control. That Christ regarded my helpless estate.
And hath shed His own blood for my soul.
3. My sin, oh the bliss of this glorious thought,
My sin, not in part but the whole, Is nailed to the cross,
and I bear it no more, Praise the Lord, praise the Lord O my soul.
4. And Lord, haste the day when the faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll, The trump shall resound,
and the Lord shall descend "Even so" it is well with my soul.

Nagafe Dika Kpakpandu Ututu

1. Nagafe dika kpakpandu ututu Nk'ihe-ha,
furu mgbe anyanwu wara. Otua k'anyi gesisi n'olu uwa nka la
n'olu anyi ka ageji cheta anyi.

Chorus:

Nani n'olu anyi, nani olu anyi. Nani n'olu anyi,
ka'ageji cheta anyi. Otua k'anyi gesi si n'olu uwa nka la.
Nani olu anyi k'gaeji cheta anyi

2. Agacho anyi ma ndiozo ganochi anyi Nag horo
nkpuru n'ubi anyi kuru E'ma ndi naku nkpkuru ganwu
n'olu Ihe-necheta-ha ga bu olu ha luru.

3. Nani ezi okwu anyi kwuru mgbe anyi di ndu Nani mkpuru anyi kuru n'uwa nkaa Ndia gadigide mgbe e'chefusiri anyi Nkpuru-owuwe-ubi, n'olu anyi luru.

4. Mgbe Jesus ga aguka ndi nkeya onu. Mgbe anyi ga ekpu okpu eze oke anu. Mgbe-ahu ka agaecheta ezi ndi oru ya. Ha nile, site n'olu ha luru. Amen .

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

1. Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father. There is no shadow of turning with Thee. Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not. As Thou hast been, Thou forever will be.

Refrain:

Great is Thy faithfulness Great is Thy faithfulness
Morning by morning new mercies I see
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me

2. Summer and winter and springtime and harvest. Sun, moon and stars in their courses above. Join with all nature in manifold witness. To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love

3. Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide. Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow. Blessings all mine with 10,000 beside all eternity.

Ogadimma M'Emesia

Chorus:

Nedi ya ... Nedi ya, Nedi ya,
Nedi ya nime obi uto. Nedi ya n'ime okwukwe
Nedi ya nolile anya, Odabere na akwa ya,
Otu obula osiri di, Oga adi mma n'emesia.
Ndei ya.

1. Nihi-olu oma nke oluru, Nedi ya...
Nihi ala-eze nk'igwe, nedi ya ...
Nihi okwu emere ahu, nedi ya ...
Okwu ya bu uzo nke ndu, nedi ya ...

2. Nihi-nkwa nk'okwere anyi, Nedi Ya ...
Nihi ala-eze nke igwe, nedi ya ...

Olile anya izute ya, nedi ya ...
Obi unu adalam mba, nedi Ya ...

Chineke Onyeoma (Mma Mma)

Chorus:

Kene Chineke jaya mma,
Ekene idi mma hee
Oyekere uwa onye oma, onye oma, onye oma
(twice)

1. So num tobe ya, tobe nu Chineke,
Ekene diri Gi Nna moo, imee na.
Kanyi ja ya mma, buye ya oyiye ndi nmma,
Anyi ekene Gi, Nna moo imee na,
Agam eji gini kene Gi, Eze ebube k'ibu,
Otito na nsopuru diri Gi, Eze da-alu

2. Ihu n'anyi Chineke, ka siru akasi,
Osebuluwa Chineke, da-alu imee na.
Nara Onyiye, umu gi na eye Gi,
Nara aja, anyi na ajuru Gi
Onyiye nwayi ajadu, anyi na ebuye Gi,
Nara ya, ma goziekwa ya.

3. Nneru anyi na enu Chi moo,
Aka oru Gi bara uba,
Kpakpandu na owa na anyuwu,
Ha nile bu aka oru Gi,
Onye njo kam bu ezie, Ma na igbahara moo
Nkpo Gi ezie Onyewem,
Ugboro assa ka I'na aza



The Heart of My Foundation: A Tribute to Hon. Justice Umegbolu Emmanuel Okoye Nri-Ezedi (Rtd.)

How do you say goodbye to a man who was more than just a father, but the very foundation upon which your world was built?

Daddy, you were my first teacher, my guide, my protector, and my greatest example of strength, wisdom, and love. As your first child and daughter—*Ada Umegbolu*—I had the rare and sacred privilege of walking closest to your footsteps, seeing the world through your discerning eyes, and learning firsthand what it meant to live with purpose, dignity, and conviction.

Even when we were challenged, your deep sense of responsibility and the sacred obligation to provide for and protect your family never faltered. You were the steady force that anchored us, the quiet strength that gave us courage.

To the world, you were a towering figure—an accomplished jurist, a man of principle, a disciplinarian whose presence naturally commanded respect. But to me, you were simply Daddy—my unwavering pillar, the deep voice that reassured me, the wisdom that guided me, and the love that embraced me, often silently but always fully.

"Ezi afa ka ego"—"A good name is worth more than wealth."

You didn't just speak those words—you embodied them. You taught me and my siblings that true success is not measured by riches but by character, integrity, and service to others. You instilled in us the values of hard work, perseverance, and your unshakable belief that "there is no failure in hard work."

Despite your many accomplishments, you lived simply, humbly, and with deep contentment. You didn't chase status or seek applause. Your joy was in your family—in the quiet companionship of Mummy, in the laughter of your children, in the lessons you imparted over dinner tables that became altars of wisdom. Those memories, those stories, are now part of the fabric we will wrap ourselves in for comfort and strength.

Beyond being my father, you were my greatest role model. You showed me how to live with honor, to lead with quiet strength, to stand firm in my beliefs while remaining kind and compassionate. You taught me that ambition must never come at the expense of integrity.

Now, as I stand here grappling with the weight of your absence, I do not mourn without hope. The signs were there, but I did not see. Like the disciples on the road to Emmaus, my eyes were closed to the message in your words and actions.

Last December, God gave us a divine gift—time together as a family. You quietly began to tie up loose ends, ensuring unity and peace in both our nuclear and extended family. When you told me that only God would determine if we would meet again, I brushed it aside. When you asked for a second hug, I smiled, unaware of the farewell tucked inside your gesture. How did I not see?

It hurts beyond words to say goodbye. But I take comfort in knowing that you were ready—that you had lived fully, given selflessly, and left a legacy as expansive and sheltering as the *Ogbunehendo* tree whose name you so fittingly bore.

As Merle Haggard's words echo in my heart, I pray: "*Lord, for my sake, teach me to take one day at a time.*" I still hear your voice gently calling me, "*Ada Umegbolu,*" and I struggle with the ache of knowing I will not hear it again this side of heaven.

But today, I choose to celebrate you. I celebrate the life you lived, the truths you stood for, and the love you wrapped us in. You may be gone from our sight, but you remain deeply etched in our hearts. Your story doesn't end here—it continues through me, through my siblings, your grandchildren, and every life you touched with your steady hand and generous spirit.

I promise you, Daddy, that my siblings and I will take care of Mummy. She will be fine—because that is all you would want.

Rest well, Daddy. You have run your race, and you have run it well. It is well.

I love you always.

Adieu, Umegbolu.

Jee ofuma, Ogbunehendo.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness..." — 2 Timothy 4:7–8

With all my love,

Dr. (Mrs.) Chinwe Ejikeme (Ada Umegbolu)





A Tribute to Grandpa

Though distance kept us apart for much of our lives, the impact of your life, Grandpa, has always reached us—across the miles, through stories, and in the quiet ways your legacy lives on.

For some of us, there was only one opportunity to meet you in person, yet even in that brief time, and through all that we've heard, we came to know the man you were: wise, kind, strong, and deeply devoted to his family.

Through the memories shared by our mom, we've come to understand your steady presence and enduring sense of right and wrong. We've heard of your integrity as a judge, your deep love for Grandma, and the sacrifices you made to ensure your children—and by extension, we, your grandchildren—could live fuller, brighter lives.

We know that your life was built on hard work, self-respect, and a life shaped by meaning. The respect you earned was not demanded—it was given freely by all who saw how you lived, led, and loved.

Even though we didn't have many shared moments, your presence was always felt—in how lovingly our mom spoke of you, in the values she and our dad passed on, and in the way our family remains tightly bound together by love and respect.

Grandpa, we wish we had more time. But we are grateful for the stories, the memories, and that one precious visit. And most of all, we are grateful to be part of the legacy you left behind—a legacy that continues to inspire us to live with integrity, grace, and a deep love for family.

Thank you for the life you lived.

Thank you for the light you left in all of us.

We will carry your memory always, across the miles and in our hearts.

With love,

Your Grandchildren from Afar

Chukwudumebi, Chikosolu, Ifenlota, and Dilichukwu



Appreciation

The Nri-Ezedi and Ejikeme families are deeply grateful for the outpouring of love, prayers, and support we've received since the sudden passing of our beloved father, husband, grandfather, brother, and brother-in-law, Hon. Justice Umegbolu Emmanuel Okoye Nri-Ezedi.

His passing has been incredibly distressing for all of us. However, we find comfort and strength in the overwhelming support and fellowship from many people, some of whom we may not have been able to personally thank. May Almighty God bless you abundantly for your kindness and generosity.

**Engr. Stanley and Dr. (Mrs.) Chinwe Ejikeme
For the Family**

Hon. Justice Umegbolu Emmanuel Okoye
Nri-Ezedi (Ogbunechendo Nri)
Birthday Celebration January 2025





Hon. Justice
Umegbolu Emmanuel Okoye
Nri-Ezedi (Ogbunechendo Nri)
Chief Judge (Emeritus), Anambra State, Nigeria
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