

Nigerian mission delivers supplies

By MICHELLE R. MUNSON
Editor

Rev. Father Isaac Ihiasota returned to his African homeland of Nigeria over the Thanksgiving holidays, armed with about 214 pounds of medicine and hospital supplies. The 10-day trip sent this Grand Ledge reverend into a country whose political and economic base is unstable, carrying supplies to help those suffering in the land where he was born.

Ihiasota, a Grand Ledge resident and reverend at Trinity Episcopal Church, returned to the place of his birth — St. Christopher's Anglican Hospital, the recipient of the medicine and supplies. The supplies, collected by World Medical Relief Inc., a United Way Agency in Detroit, are worth a total of \$43,662,80 spread over 17 packages. Antibiotics, anti-hypertension medicine, laxatives, cough and cold medicine, bandages and syringes were included in the packages that made their way across the Atlantic.

The hospital destination is the only hospital in the village of Atta, Nigeria and the 80-bed facility serves people from up to 20 miles away. Many of the health care recipients are pregnant women and children.

World Medical Relief, according to Ihiasota, collects medicine from pharmacies that would have expired on shelves and "ships them to where they would be used right away, like Africa or Bosnia, rather than keep them here where they might expire and end up in landfills."

He says of his mission, "This is for the sick, poor and needy of Nigeria. With all the inconveniences of being away from my family at Thanksgiving, and the



HUMANITARIAN VENTURE — Father Isaac Ihiasota of Trinity Episcopal Church in Grand Ledge, left Nov. 19 for a ten-day humanitarian mission to his native Nigeria. With him, he took 17 packages of medicine and medical supplies, valued at more than \$43,600. Photo by Michelle R. Munson.

risks I'm taking, it's worth it because the supplies are going to save one person at least."

This humanitarian mission has Father Isaac venturing to a land whose medical professionals are in such dire need of supplies that syringes must be boiled after use because they will be needed again. It is a trip he contributed \$655 of his own money to make, and paid all of his own travel expenses (about \$4,000) for the trip over the Thanksgiving holiday.

He says, "The political situation is horrible, very scary. I'm excited to see my mother, but not about the political and economic situation there. It's worsened over the last few years."

He says that in the not-too-distant past, one Nigerian dollar equaled about

\$1.20 in United States currency. Today, he says about 95 Nigerian dollars equal \$1 in the United States. He adds that, according to a recent *U.S. News and World Report* article, Nigeria supplies about 10 percent of all the light crude oil used in the United States.

Ihiasota also took with him a 250 mg hard drive computer to give to the bishop, the overseer of St. Christopher's Anglican Hospital, a donation from area attorneys Nancy Wonch and Tom Anderson. A wheelchair for his mother, who recently suffered from a stroke, was donated by a local resident and also made the trek.

Contributions for the trip came from St. Michael's Episcopal Church in Lansing, Grace

ria with model agroforestry projects involving village men, women and children. For information, call 627-6287.

Trinity Episcopal Church has an interesting relationship to Nigeria. Trinity's priest, Rev. Isaac Ihiasota, is in Nigeria on a mission to deliver a significant amount of medical supplies obtained through World Medical Relief. Rev. Isaac is still seeking help to defray the considerable expenses associated with his trip. Donations may be sent to the parish's Discretionary Fund, care of Trinity Episcopal Church, P.O. Box 116, Grand Ledge.

Episcopal Church in Grand Rapids, the priest at St. Johns Episcopal in Midland and area individuals. He has been in Grand Ledge, as head of Trinity Episcopal Church for more than four years, and in the United States for about 11 years.

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Program, sale of Nigerian art held Dec. 3

In conjunction with the Grand Ledge Holiday Home Tour, Trinity Episcopal Church, 201 East Jefferson, has arranged for a special sale of Nigerian and other West African art and artifacts. The sale takes place in the parish undercroft from 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 3.

Stephen Chukwuemaka Uche, member of St. Aidan's Episcopal Church in Ann Arbor, plans to be present at the church for the 10 a.m. worship service, which is followed immediately by a potluck luncheon. He will also provide a brief slide presentation regarding his work in Nige-

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