

A MYSTERY AND REALITY

**DIVINE REVELATIONS AT JERUSALEM NO. 2
AT NKORANZA IN THE CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF TECHIMAN**

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and

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While we do acknowledge all these people, the authors are solely responsible for any lapses that may be contained therein.

DEDICATION

To the memory of the late George Akwasi Agyei (Wɔfa George).



Wafa George prayed the Rosary with characteristic devotion, and truly demonstrated that it is a very powerful weapon against evil/Satan and a tool in receiving God's mercy and favour.

FOREWORD

The authors of this book have presented a thorough, thoughtful and prayerful reflection on the life and devotional practices of Wōfa George, the founder of the Sacred Heart Grotto at Jerusalem No. 2. In the book, the authors outlined vividly the genesis and history of the Sacred Heart Grotto.

As a sort of biography, this book portrays the austere and dedicated life of Wōfa George who responded to the Divine call and took a path to follow Jesus in a manner that paralleled the austerity and sacrifice of the early disciples of Jesus. Wōfa George's search for God and the meaning of life led to the development of a personal faith that gave him a very intimate experience of God.

The historical aspect of the book provides the genesis of every stage of the development of the Sacred Heart Grotto. Reasons are given for the creation of every piece of the entire Grotto based on the extraordinary soul-searching visions of Wōfa George, who was such an inspired contemplative.

This Historic Book directs all followers of Christ who wish to seek genuine spirituality and transcendence. This book covers the practices of various Catholic Devotions at this Grotto and profoundly reveals the power of prayer and meditation in these Catholic beliefs and practices.

The simplicity of devotions and prayers at the Sacred Heart Grotto underscores the importance of seeking God through the heart rather than the intellect.

The imaginative and creative ways with which Wōfa George developed the Sacred Heart Grotto over the years in his natural environment, teaches us to develop our own spirituality and closer relationship with God wherever we find ourselves.

This book is well written for all persons who wish to seek solace, contemplation, devotion, prayer, faith, charity and service. The authors

underscore the Catholic, ecumenical, national and international character of the Sacred Heart Grotto. It is a home to everyone because it exhibits the nature and character of the founder, Wofa George, who is all-embracing and the caretaker of all.

Apart from its historical perspective, this book is an excellent resource material for Religious Education teachers who wish to know about the meaning and purpose of our various Catholic Devotions.

REV. MONSIGNOR GEORGE KWAME KUMI

Vicar General of the Catholic Diocese of Sunyani

INTRODUCTION

Places are described as holy when they are specially linked to God¹. Such places may be natural or deliberately created by man and are not limited to any one particular religious group. In the Catholic Church, holy places fall under various categories. The Holy Land is the foremost holy place in the Catholic Church. Apart from being the place where our Lord was born, its holiness also derives from the fact that it is the same place where Our Lady and some of the Saints who participated more intimately in the Divine life left their indelible footprints. In other words, wherever they walked becomes holy because of their close affinity with Christ. The Holy House of Nazareth also stands as one of the most highly indulgenced of all shrines as it was the place where the Holy Family lived. Believed to have been transported to Loreto in Italy some centuries ago, its original walls still remain with the inscription on the door, *Hic Verbum Caro Factum Est*, meaning “Here the Word Was Made Flesh.”²

Again, there is no place holier than that which houses God Himself, for which reason the Tabernacle becomes one of the holiest places. It is the place where the consecrated Host (the body of Christ) is reserved. All Catholic Churches the world over therefore constitute a major configuration of holy places, for in all these are found the Tabernacle.

Other shrines or grottoes outside of the Holy Land but which are directly connected to Christ are also another kind of holy places in the Catholic Church. The shrine/grotto may be a commemoration of a sacred event such as an apparition or a miracle. It may also serve as an abode for a relic that is directly connected to Jesus Christ or the Virgin Mary. Renowned Shrines in this category include the Marian Shrines at Guadalupe in Mexico, Lourdes in France and Fatima in Portugal.

¹Catholicism.Org. Retrieved: 17/02/14

²Ibid. Also see Altemose, Charlene, *What You Should Know About Mary*, Bandra: ST. PAULS, 2012. P 95.

Indeed, one of the most recent or contemporary events related to the Virgin Mary and holy places are the alleged Marian apparitions since the early 1980s in Medjugorje in Eastern Europe. Though a Vatican Committee is yet to disclose a final verdict on the apparitions and some people still remain sceptical about the episode, the place is known to have yielded good fruits ever since. In February 1917, Pope Francis appointed the retired Polish Archbishop Henryk Hoser as Papal Envoy to Medjugorje and in May 2018 proceeded to make him a Special Apostolic Visitor to the place.³ James Caviezel, acting Christ in Mel Gibson's film, **'Passion of the Christ'** comments, "If it wasn't for Medjugorje, I wouldn't have played in movie "Passion"⁴ Though a devout Catholic, he said in Medjugorje he had experienced a certain dimension of faith that was unknown to him until then. He also recalled that while the film was being shot, prayers were ongoing worldwide, yet they did experience three lightning strikes of which he was hit by one as the sky lowered causing his body to actually illuminate, and he believed he could have even been incinerated. One of the actors in the film, a Muslim acting as one of the guards who beat Jesus (Caviezel) had a real experience and converted to Christianity.

Other shrines may serve the purpose of honouring a saint such as Compostella in Spain which honours St. James the Greater. In Montreal (Canada) is the St. Joseph's Oratory which is in honour of the protector of the Holy Family, the Spouse of Our Lady and Patron of the Universal Church.

Other places which may also be considered to be holy are those places where missionaries worked or still continue to work with heroic zeal and where people may visit for purely religious/spiritual reasons.⁵

³<https://cruxnow.com/global-church/2018/05/31>, 'For the Second time, Pope sends special envoy to Medjugorje'. Retrieved on 26/ 06/2018.

⁴www.medjugorje.ws/en/articles/jim-caviezel-would-not-played=moviepassion/ Also see Altemose, Charlene, *What You Should Know About Mary*, Bandra: ST. PAULS, 2012. P 90.

⁵Joanna, Bogle, Ten Catholic Places to visit before you die, www.Catholic.com Retrieved: 17/02/14

A classic example here are the homes run by Mother Theresa's Sisters in Calcutta and other places, and the island of Molokai where Blessed. Fr. Damien (St. Damien) gave his life for those suffering from leprosy.

In line with some of these traditions therefore the Sacred Heart of Jesus Grotto at Nkoranza can best be classified as God's gift to the Church and indeed the world. It is a classic manifestation of God's faithfulness to His people through the demonstration of unflinching faith in Him by George Akwasi Adjei (Wɔfa George). For many years, the people of Nkoranza had considered the place to be an evil forest that was not suitable for human habitation, but little did they know that it was God's gift to His people on earth, and that it had to be preserved for some time until God's appointed time to reveal the place to the world. So truly, this Holy Land was taken over by other spiritual powers directly opposed to God. For the land to serve its divine and rightful purpose, these opposing forces needed to be overpowered. Wɔfa would in the course of time spring up, as the seed, through which God would reveal this Holy Land to His people. It has now become a place where many in a troubled world go for spiritual refuge, as well as for other life encounters with the Lord.

Therefore, as a holy place how is the Sacred Heart of Jesus Grotto connected to God? First of all, it was founded on faith in God. The Stations/Way of the Cross was the first to be revealed as one of the important prayers of the place when Wɔfa touched the Grotto grounds.⁶ But what do Christians/Catholics call the Stations or Way of the Cross? It is a prayer that reminisces the fourteen most important events in the last hours of Christ's earthly journey as he moved from his trial ground until his death on the Cross on Mount Calvary through to His burial. The events follow in this order: 1st Station - Condemnation of Jesus to death: 2nd Station - Jesus carries his Cross: 3rd Station - Jesus falls for the first time: 4th Station - Jesus meets his mother Mary: 5th Station - Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry his Cross: 6th Station.

⁶Destiny, Francis Amenuvor (Rev. Fr.), *The Via Dolorosa (Stations of the Cross)*, Accra: Danitess Printing and Publishing Ltd, 2011. Pp 1- 40.

Veronica wipes the face of Jesus: 7th Station – the Second fall of Jesus: 8th Station - Jesus consoles the women of Jerusalem: 9th Station - the Third fall of Jesus: 10th Station - Jesus is stripped of his garments: 11th Station – Jesus is nailed to the Cross: 12th Station - Jesus dies on the Cross: 13th Station – Jesus is taken down from the Cross: 14th Station - Jesus is laid in the Sepulchre. We are reminded of the depth of the pain and hardship our Lord went through for our salvation. God's most profound love for us becomes alive as the Lord endured this pain and shame for our salvation. On the first Friday of every month, all pilgrims converge to perform this prayer and celebrate the Holy Eucharist. On other Fridays, the Catholic community at Jerusalem No. 2 walks this path praying the Stations of the Cross. Some of the pilgrims either in groups or individuals who visit the Grotto on ordinary days find it appropriate to walk and pray through these Stations.

Again as a place directly connected with God, it is home for everyone, irrespective of religious denomination. Our common humanity as people created by one God, forming one family, our differences notwithstanding, finds expression here. Christians, Muslims and Traditionalists have all been here and there is enough evidence to prove that many have found fulfillment by associating with Jerusalem No. 2.

Emphasising on the significance of holy sites, Pope Francis said Catholic shrines are a key place for evangelisation.⁷ In a document he issued concerning sacred places in the Church, he noted that they are especially suitable to conversion and the strengthening of faith, as well as express an irreplaceable opportunity for evangelisation in our time. On 1st April, 2017, he moved the responsibility for Catholic shrines from the Vatican Congregation for Clergy to the Vatican Congregation for the promotion of the New Evangelisation. In the document titled “*Ecclesia in Sanctuarium*”, (In the Church Sanctuary) he outlines the tasks of the Congregation

⁷Pope Francis says Catholic shrines are a key place for evangelization: <http://www.ewtnnews.com/catholic-news/Vatican.php?id=1532>

to include the following: the establishment of new national and international shrines, studying and implementing measures for promoting their role in evangelisation, and promoting systematic pastoral care of the shrine and specific training for those who operate them.

With regard to grottoes being places of conversion and strengthening of faith as noted by the Pope, Jerusalem No. 2 has yielded good fruits and has therefore responded to the needs for which holy sites exist according to the teachings of the Holy Roman Catholic Church. The Grotto plays a key role in encouraging the faithful in receiving and returning to the sacraments.

Chapter One

FOUNDING OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS GROTTO: FAITH IN ACTION

Wɔfa George did not initially plan or set out to start a grotto. Indeed, he was born into a society which was completely untouched by Christianity, and only became converted as an adult far away from his place of birth. How then has the Sacred Heart of Jesus Grotto come to be so much synonymous with his name? It is only through careful examination of the man's life as he lived it that the hand of God in the whole process is truly revealed.

Wɔfa George: Birth and Early Childhood

Wɔfa George was born to Opanin Kwadwo Nsiah of Akonkonti Odumase (Nkoranza) and Yaa Baagyei (alias *Yaa Mum* because she was born dumb) of Asempanaye (Nkoranza). The year of birth was 1897 at Asempanaye but the specific date is not known. He was named Akwasi Agyei.⁸ George was later added to his traditional name when he was baptised into the Catholic faith. Later in adult life he came to be simply called Wɔfa by everyone. Why he came to adopt the name Wɔfa would be explained later.

On the day of his birth, fire gutted the entire village of Asempanaye, a situation that compelled his mother to temporarily relocate to Nyinase upon the invitation of George's uncle, Opanin Ntrubu. In those days, rooms were kept warm and lighted usually at night by burning a little firewood throughout the night. One night, while Yaa Baagyei sat by the fireside in her room with little George on her lap,

⁸Akwasi being the Akan name for a male Sunday born informs us that he was born on a Sunday.

he fell into the fire as his mother dozed off. He was rescued by uncle Ntrubu whose attention was drawn to the scene by George's unusual cry. Partly burnt and appeared deformed on both legs, uncle Ntrubu suggested that George be killed in the fashion in which children born with abnormalities were killed in those days⁹. Nevertheless, the little boy was saved by one of the elders in the village by name Opanin Kodom who was knowledgeable in herbal medicine. Believing that the case was not a hopeless one, the regular application of his herbal preparations totally healed the burns and restored the little boy to normalcy.

Not very long after this incident, their sojourn was cut short by a message from George's maternal grandfather, Opanin Yaw Toa, a hunter who had sent word to uncle Ntrubu to dispatch them immediately to his village. The urgency with which they were recalled soon unfolded upon their arrival: a short ceremony in honour of George as a prospective hero among his people was performed. George was made to sit on an elephant that was killed by Opanin Toa (his maternal grandfather).

A loaded flint gun was then placed on his chest and fired three times into the air. The ceremony, according to the belief of the people, signified that George was going to be a brave man in the family who in the future would be a hero among his people. They envisaged this in worldly terms but it turned out that he was going to become a hero and warrior for Christ, being at the forefront in the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth and the winning of souls for Christ. From Yaw Toah's village, Yaa Baagyei and her son moved to Buoso where they stayed for some time before George joined his father at Odumase (Akonkonti).

⁹In traditional African society, children born with abnormalities were considered an anathema and were disposed of by deliberately killing them. Usually, the disposal of such babies was carried out by spiritualists who were believed to have knowledge of handling such cases.

Both parents were subsistence farmers but his father was also a specialist in carving mortars and pestles. As a young boy, he became an apprentice under the tutelage of his own father and also learnt tailoring at some point in time.

Conversion and Marriage

Nkoranza is derived from the term *Nkɔkora mmiɛnsa* (three old men) on account of the fact that the town Nkoranza was founded by three old men, Nananom Baffoe, Kusi and Sese who migrated from Amakom, a suburb of modern Kumasi. With the gradual impact of the money economy characterised largely by cash crop production of crops like cocoa, people's attention began to shift away from subsistence farming and Nkoranza was not left out in this direction. Migration especially to cocoa growing areas and urban/commercial centres came under high patronage. As a young boy, George joined his elder brother to undertake one of such journeys to Kwaman, near Offinso (Ashanti Region), where upon arrival, they were lucky to have been received by an elder of the Catholic Church in the town, by name Opanin Kwasi Amankwa. As he eventually became their landlord they asked for his assistance in securing a job to earn a living and he led them to secure employment in cocoa cultivation as farmhands.

One of the things that quickly came to the attention of young George was that at the ringing of an improvised bell every evening, all members of the household left for a place unknown to him and returned some hours later. Upon enquiry, he was told that they attended "school" every evening. Desirous of joining them, he sought his landlord's permission and was duly granted. The "school" turned out to be a Catholic Church. Illiteracy did not prevent him from grasping the tenets of the Catholic faith within a short period of time. His search for wealth in cocoa farming was not only replaced with an entirely new mission altogether, but a truly bumper harvest in this new mission.

Enthused by his new religion, he readily made up his mind to introduce the Catholic faith in his hometown and therefore returned home.

He first came to settle at Akokonti Odumase, his father's hometown to start the Church.

Meanwhile, George at this time had attained adult status and the family had taken a decision to find him a wife. He eventually got married to Akosua Addai but the union was plagued with infant mortality with the children dying one after the other as soon as they were born. When a son (Augustine Ofosu) was born after the death of two children, George put a Cross on his neck apparently against the wish of his wife. The wife took ill and died, but the son Augustine Ofosu survived, and is alive today. He later married a second wife, Veronica Adwoa Twaa, and had six children with her with only one dying at infancy. Only one female was among the children, whom George believed was a child of promise as it was earlier on revealed to him that he would beget a female to be called Mary and one who would help his course. In the said revelation there appeared two angels in a descending position from the sky. In between them was a ladder on which laid a baby covered with a white cloth. As they descended to his level, the child was placed in his hands with the words, "*wo Mary nie*", meaning "this is your Mary" who would assist in your mission as well as ensure and maintain its continuity. Wɔfa turned around and saw that his mother was directly behind him and he offered the child to her for proper upbringing. The mother who did not understand what had just taken place asked the son for an explanation. Through sign language, Wɔfa did manage to convey to his mother's understanding that the child was a gift from God. Later when the wife took seed and he predicted a female child, it came to pass and Eno Mary the only female child of George was born. Today the Grotto has become her home where among other things she remains an important link between her late father and the world. Having been brought up by the man and having been the sole caretaker of Wɔfa in his old age through to death, her accounts are among the most authentic and the most reliable.¹⁰

¹⁰So far, there is no written account of the founding of the Grotto and if the true story is not told exactly as it occurred by those who worked closely with Wɔfa George like Francis Asiedu (Akonta) and Eno Mary, some useful information could be lost to posterity.



Eno Mary: the only female child of Wɔfa who served him throughout his life. She is here feeding him in his old age.

Among the male children who were born after Eno Mary, the birth of Simon marked another important stage in the life of George. About five months into his conception, George in a conversation with his wife did express emphatically that he was going to be a communicant by Easter time which was just about only two months away. His wife found this to be highly impossible since some aspect of the traditional marriage rite was not yet performed and she was also just about five months pregnant. No arrangement for the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony (wedding) had also been made. All these needed to be done to pave the way for Holy Matrimony. Like a doubting Thomas, she did not believe in the possibility of the humanly impossible. George's response to his wife's disbelief was that, if she considered the child in the womb to be an obstacle, she was going to give birth to pave the way for the Holy Matrimony. Indeed Wɔfa ordered her, "wo" (give birth).

No sooner did the words fall from George's lips than his wife got into labour. Though the wife pleaded for forgiveness, the labour pains got intense. On that fateful Wednesday, she was rushed to the Holy Family Hospital at Techiman where she was readily attended to as George was well known because of his involvement with the Catholic Church there. She did not believe she was actually in labour since the pregnancy was just a little over five months but when she was told to expect her baby on Friday, she did not imagine how that was going to be possible. The truth is that she delivered a baby boy on the Friday as she was told. As a premature child, the new born was incubated to receive intensive care. George named him Simon because he believed that like Simon of Cyrene, he had come to lift a burden off him.

True to his word, a sympathiser and an elder from Brahohoo, Opanin Kofi Fofie who had also been converted to Catholicism elsewhere before returning to Nkoranza, and had become friends with Wofa paid him a visit. When he got to know the story, he visited Yefri (hometown of George's wife) to perform the final traditional marriage rites for the couple at his own cost. Their friendship was rooted in their common religious background, having had separate but the same religious experience in their respective sojourns. At the same time and unknown to George, Reverend Father Willebrordus Henricus Huisman SMA (Parish Priest of Techiman 1953 - 1970, popularly called Father Huisman) had decided to spend Easter at Asempanaye. So all that needed to be done to pave the way for a wedding were done and Father Huisman blessed the marriage on his visit. What seemed humanly impossible became possible in the end.

Wofa believed he was then in a perfect marriage union but he later related that in another dream he had a visit from the three white men and was told that his mission was getting to a peak and he had to be more available for the work. So he was told angels would come in the course of time to take his wife away from him. Not happy with the idea of losing his wife, he suggested separation from her as an alternative, but was told that it was not appropriate since the marriage was bound by

the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony. While preoccupied with thoughts of this encounter, another child was born after Simon, but died a day after birth. Not long after this, the wife took ill. She complained of pain in her thigh. The situation got worse and he arranged for her to be taken to the Holy Family Hospital at Techiman for treatment. A quickly improvised hammock (*nkyonkyonkyon*) was used to carry her as there was no vehicular transport linking surrounding villages to Nkoranza. On the way, she thanked Wɔfa profusely that she received baptism and Holy Communion, which have paved the way for angels to come and take her home. She added that he should ensure that all the children received baptism as well as Holy Communion so that they could all meet someday in heaven. Noteworthy was also the fact that she cautioned her husband against another marriage union. She demonstrated her trust in Wɔfa by affirming that she believed he was going to act accordingly. She reiterated that Wɔfa should send her back as she was not going to get to Techiman alive, because Wɔfa's angels had come to take her away. Having said these, she bade her husband goodbye. Wɔfa nonetheless encouraged the bearers to move faster with her and said that what she said was a talk associated with sick people. When they realised that she had been quiet for a while, Wɔfa asked the bearers to stop and they obliged. Upon closely examining the wife, he realised that she had indeed passed on and they had to return with the body to Asempanaye.

While arrangements were underway for the funeral, Wɔfa convened a meeting of his entire family. He explained to them that the family of his deceased wife was going to create a scene during the funeral, but that they were to remain calm and not react in any way that could lead to a chaotic situation. It did happen as he had said. When his in-laws arrived, they accused him of causing the death of his own wife by going to stay on a land that had never until then been occupied by any human being. They rained insults on him but as he had already cautioned his family against any form of retaliation, the problem with his in-laws ended.

Father Huisman SMA came from Techiman to perform the burial service after which she was buried at Asempanaye. When asked whether he would marry again, George's reply to Fr. Huisman was that he would remain single and serve the Lord, a promise he kept until his call to eternity.

Chapter Two

EVANGELISING MISSION

Christianity has had minimum contact with the people of Nkoranza at this time. Most of the people paid allegiance to the Ntoa deity which had its shrines in most of the towns and villages around Nkoranza. Therefore one can say that this effort of George constituted primary evangelisation among his own people.

Odumase- Akonkonti (First Phase)

The process of evangelisation among his people occurred in two phases. He started from his father's hometown (Odumase-Akonkonti) and moved later to his mother's village (Asempanaye). He approached the Chief of Odumase for permission and a location to start his "school" which was the Church. He was given a portion of land for his mission. He started his "school" and improvised a bell with which he called people to prayer every morning and evening and on Sundays. Many of the people out of curiosity stood by and watched him stand or kneel to pray all alone. He was initially tagged a "mad man" since the habit of talking to no person in particular is associated with madness.

He managed to get a little following, but their activities soon revealed that it was not the kind of school the people had expected. Their activities violated some of the taboos of the Ntoa deity. The Chief, elders and some of the townsfolk became very upset and uncomfortable with the turn of events. Wɔfa's father was asked to perform some pacification rites to avert the incidence of a calamity. Although George discouraged his father from performing the rites and continued with his work, the father ignored the son and did as he was expected to do.

In this early stage, one of the main challenges which confronted his embryonic fellowship was peaceful coexistence with the adherents of Ntoa as they had to observe so many taboos associated with the deity. Taboos of the deity included the following: Wednesday was observed as the sacred day of the deity; the deity was confined for some time before Christmas during which drumming, singing and dancing, shouting and performance of funerals were forbidden; non-circumcision of males; *dawadawa*, goat meat as well as alligator were forbidden foods in the whole area.¹¹ Believing that as a practising Catholic, the food taboos of his people were not binding on him and to prove the authenticity and efficacy of his new religion to his doubting followers, he invited them to a meal of alligator which he had cooked in an earthenware pot. He explained that their consumption of the meat broke every bond which existed between them and the deity and the influence the deity had over them. According to Wɔfa adherence to the taboos natures the bond and influence the deity has over one. To curtail that there was the need for a postive defiance. Together they prayed over the meat and ate, but not after fifteen minutes after Wɔfa George had had his share. Wɔfa wanted to give them the assurance that the power in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and faith in Him, would ensure their safety. This group of people at Odumase who ate the alligator with him in this case was truly his first converts. The other onlookers who refused to partake in the alligator meal wasted no time in reporting to the chief and his elders who became angry that Wɔfa had broken one of the taboos of Ntoa. However, no immediate action was taken against him.

One day, Wɔfa George detected that an alligator he had trapped and killed to be used for a meal was nowhere to be found. Upon suspicion, he traced to the chief's house where he found out that the animal had been taken to the cemetery. At the cemetery, he found a spot of freshly dug earth which he unearthed and there laid the alligator wrapped in white calico. When he returned the calico to the chief after making away with his alligator, he was warned of his impending death to be caused by Ntoa, their deity, if he did not stop breaking the taboos.

¹¹*Dawadawa* is a local spice prepared from the African locust bean (*parkia biglobosa*).

He fearlessly justified his action that the God that he served created everything for the benefit of man.

Asempanaye (Second Phase)

Because of these challenges among his father's people at Odumase (Akonkonti), Wɔfa decided to move to his mother's hometown, Asempanaye to continue with his evangelisation exploits. After all he thought his own kinsmen ought to benefit from the treasure (Christian faith) he had brought from his sojourn. Mpem, a twin-village of Asempanaye was the actual seat of the Ntoa deity. Wɔfa believed that the success of his mission there was going to do away with any misgivings that the people had about his new religion (Christianity/Catholicism). Everything pointed to a stiffer opposition here yet George was determined to extend his mission there.

At Asempanaye, he repeated the same actions and defiance as in Odumase and the chief, Nana Akwatia Poku and his elders did not take kindly to his actions. However, as Christmas drew nearer, they waited to see how he would cope with the ban on noise-making and his Christmas festivities. Their expectations were confirmed for on the 24th of December Wɔfa George and his group of converts celebrated 24th Night Service in their own fashion. There was no priest in attendance to celebrate the birth of Christ with them. In the course of their celebration, they broke the rule on noise-making. In a procession, Wɔfa led the group amidst singing, drumming and dancing, and they filled the whole village with excitement. There was a small Ntoa shrine in front of the chief's palace. When the procession got close to the palace, they could see around the shrine something they thought was a rope of sizeable length coiled around it. They observed a certain movement from the object, Wɔfa then asked the procession to stop. Light thrown from a lantern showed that it was rather a snake that had started to uncoil and was moving towards the direction of the procession. As they stopped to observe, the snake raised its head, and Wɔfa George said these words:

Adwuma a yereye no seesei yi, eyɛ Nyame Tumfoɔ no adwuma.

Ena wonso yenim baabi a wofiri reba. Enti sɛ woreba no papa so oo, bɔne so oo yɛn nso yɛrebɔ mpaɛ wɔ Nyame Agya, Nyame Ōba ɛne Nyame Sunsum Kronkron no din mu (makes sign of the Cross - +).

English: The work that we are doing is the work of the Almighty God and we know where you are coming from (fetish shrine). Whether you are coming with good or evil intent, we are also praying in the name of the Father, the Son and of the Holy Spirit (makes sign of the Cross - +).

The snake's movement ceased and it had its head still raised. It remained motionless even when it was provoked. They believed it must have died with the invocation and the sign of the Cross. With dry grass gathered from the immediate surrounding and some little kerosene applied, the snake was burnt. The jubilation reached a crescendo since the death of the snake was considered a victory for Wɔfa and his group, and ultimately a victory of the living God over the Ntoa deity. The linguist of the Chief of Asempanaye confronted Wɔfa directly. He said Wɔfa was stubborn, rebellious, and disrespectful and does not listen to elders because his mother was deaf and dumb. Wɔfa countered that despite his mother's deafness and dumbness, he being her son had come to understand and appreciate God's word and has abandoned idol worship. A serious misunderstanding ensued between the two, but this did not stop the Christmas Eve's activity. They continued with their celebration into the night. Insults were hurled at them by some bystanders but they continued with their celebration in the Church.

At daybreak, the linguist apparently gave an exaggerated account of the previous night's encounter to the *Bosomfoɔ* (priest of the deity) and some of the elders at Sesseman. He achieved his aim by securing their anger against Wɔfa. The Chief of Asempanaye, Nana Akwatia Poku, the *Mpemhene*, Nana Kwame Kunkuma who also doubled as the *Ntoakyeame* / *Bosomkyeame* (linguist of the deity), Sesseman *Bosomfoɔ* and Nana Kodwo Baffoe I *Sessemanhene* summoned Wɔfa George before Nana Kwame Adjei, then *Nkoranzamanhene* (Chief of Nkoranza) when he refused to cave in to their demands to stop his

activities against their traditions and customs. The Sessemanhemaa at that time was Nana Adwoa Babea.

Wɔfa George before the Nkoranza Traditional Court/Council

Nananom (the chiefs) and the elders of Nkoranza saw Wɔfa's case as a very serious violation and a high profile case to be looked into. Their main deity Ntoa holding the soul of the traditional area, the god that sustains them, leads them in wars, and ensures increased production in agriculture and general well being has been offended. Wɔfa was therefore summoned to the traditional court.

At the Nkoranza traditional court, no specific date was set for trial, but he was made to report regularly, often sitting from morning till evening for three consecutive years. Trial and judgement was eventually fixed on a Friday. On that fateful Friday in front of the chief's palace, Wɔfa reportedly met three white men and a black man whom he greeted and received a smile in return. They followed him into the court and stood behind him. When Wɔfa was asked to defend himself, the black man among the group acting as spokesperson for the other three, intervened and explained that freedom of worship as a fundamental human right was recognised everywhere in the world and therefore, the defendant had no case to answer. The chiefs insisted that they had their own traditional rules and regulations to which all natives were bound to obey. Since Wɔfa George had led his group to break the rules, regulations and taboos, he was the guilty one. He was subsequently charged with the offence without an opportunity to utter even a word of defence. No one could tell exactly where the strangers came from as no one was known to have invited them, not even the defendant himself. Though stunned by the action of the strangers, the chiefs and elders ignored them and continued with the court proceedings.

Wɔfa belonged to the *Adonten* Royal Family and his uncle Nana Kofi Gyimadu was the *Adontenhene*. In that capacity, Nana Kofi Gyimadu was asked to give his opinion on the case. Wɔfa was hopeful of some good response from his uncle, but his hopes were soon to be submerged in naked betrayal by a kinsman. He said his nephew Akwasi Agyei had committed such an abomination against the state that he deserved to

have been executed and his blood sprinkled around the township to appease the gods of the land. In response to the uncle, Wɔfa said that if it was not given to them from above to sprinkle his blood they could not in any way do it. Speaking angrily and calling him a treacherous person, he threw a bunch of keys at Wɔfa, but he picked it up from the ground and politely returned it to him. The uncle concluded that his nephew's behaviour was outrageous and outlandish and that never before in the history of Nkoranza had such a case been recorded. That it was better for one man to die than for a whole community to suffer a calamity. In traditional belief system it is believed that an individual's action against a deity or any action committed by such person that breaches societal norms could bring misfortune or calamity upon the whole community- this could be a family, village or town. Therefore, Wɔfa's violations of the taboos pertaining to the Ntoa deity were seen to be threatening the welfare of the entire community.

The four strangers were also no longer in sight though no one could explain how they had disappeared. He was therefore left on his own to face the full rigours of the traditional law. He was subsequently declared guilty and punishment for the offence was the death penalty. The reality of the moment struck Wɔfa with instant deafness. He began to silently recite the Lord's Prayer and upon reaching "hallowed be thy name", his hearing was restored. However, he did not end the prayer, but continued to its conclusion. The *Omanhene*, the sub-chiefs and the elders took leave of the group to decide on the next line of action to take. They went to the first storey of a section of the chief's palace and invited Wɔfa to join them. Since he was suspicious of their intentions, he declined to go with them and insisted that the upper room was not Mount Cavalry, meaning he was not prepared to fall to whatever evil plan they held in store for him. Traditionally, royals are not liable to capital punishment. The death penalty could not be applied to Wɔfa because he belonged to the Adonten Royal Family. The chief and his elders therefore had to resort to another alternative form of punishment to curtail his activities. They decided on life imprisonment.

Accordingly, a secretary was made to write a letter instructing the authorities at Sunyani to imprison Wɔfa for life. The traditional police was dispatched to take him to Sunyani. On their way to Sunyani, Wɔfa conferred with Father Huisman SMA at Techiman who without any qualms gave him his blessing with high hopes of Divine intervention. At Sunyani, the official they met informed them the one to handle the case had travelled on official duty and was going to be away for some time. They were then told not to return with Wɔfa to Sunyani until they had heard from the authorities there. To the anger of the chiefs, Wɔfa George fearlessly displayed his courage by visiting to greet them in the morning after their arrival from Sunyani. It was later revealed that the official that they met at Sunyani was the very person who should have handled the case. The reason for which he feigned his own absence remains a mystery.

Exile/ Banishment to Yentreso

“And after this our Exile, show unto us the blessed Fruit of your Womb, Jesus.”¹²

After failing with the life imprisonment, the chiefs and elders reconvened at the *Nkoranzamanhene*'s palace and invited Wɔfa to decide on yet another alternative punishment for him. Any form of peaceful co-existence between Wɔfa/followers and the chiefs was entirely ruled out. Misunderstanding and conflicts had come to characterise their relations and one of the two definitely had to move away from the other. Obviously, the one to move was Wɔfa but was he the one to take this phenomenal decision? To which place would he have gone granted that he decided to do so? Did he even have any plan to move away from his people? The last resort was to exile Wɔfa from his own hometown to Yentreso not for any criminal activity but for the sake of Christ. Yentreso is a vast expanse of land that was prone to floods during periods of rain. It is surrounded by three Rivers-Krutu, Fia and Ofuofu. It was not known to have been inhabited by man until

¹²This is a line from *Salve Regina* (Hail Holy Queen), a popular Catholic Prayer related to the Virgin Mary.

Wɔfa George was challenged by the chiefs of Nkoranza to take habitation there. Refusal to settle or to farm on the Yentreso land was not deliberate. The land was believed to be an evil forest infested with dwarfs and other evil/malignant spirits (such as *sasabonsam*, *amuniamuni*, *homakyem/homatre* spirit that speak like humans and *kodua* spirit tree, often a habitat for dwarfs). The people believed that anybody who entered the forest died there and never returned. For this reason, they called it *Asaasebɔne*. People passing along the path through Yentreso to their villages and farms would not dare utter a word within the confines of Yentreso land. The fear was that one would die as soon as one talked. There were also other wild animals.

It is worthy of note that the Yentreso land belongs to the Nifa Stool of the Nkoranza Traditional Area. So permission was sought from the *Nifahene* of the traditional area who is also the Chief of Sesseman (*Sessemanhene*). Together he and his elders endorsed the decision and released the land for the purpose.

Since Wɔfa claimed to serve a God more powerful to protect him from all forms of danger, the chiefs and elders felt Yentreso was the best place for him. They believed his journey to Yentreso was good riddance for death was actually what they had in mind for him, and indeed they strongly believed he wouldn't survive there. He and his followers were told to move in and settle there to have the freedom to serve their God, and to avoid any confrontation with the traditional authorities and the Traditional Religion.

Wɔfa then poured out his heart to the chiefs and elders in deep appreciation for the offer of the land for his religious purpose. Nonetheless, the prophetic response of Wɔfa is worth noting.

Baabi a mo se menkorɔ no, meye Nkoranza ni ba, enti menim sɛ saa asaase no yɛfrɛ ho Yentreso, a owuo din da soɔ (obiara ntumi entena ho nnya nkwa). Nanso, me dɛ menim sɛ, me se Baasafua Kronkron ɛwɔ ho, Jesus Christ ɛwɔho, Eno Mary nso ɛwɔ ho, ɛna Honhom Kronkron nso bɛbɔ me ho ban. Enti mensuro meko na m'ayi owuo

din no afiri ho ama eho abeyɛ nkwa asaase ama nnipa nyinaa aba ho abenya nkwa. Na yɛnnfrɛ ho Yentreso bio, na yɛbɛfrɛ no Jerusalem “Number 2” ama no abɛɔ Aburokyire dɛɛ no so.

English: I’m a native of Nkoranza, and I know where you are asking me go. It is called Yentreso and it is a land associated with death (no one can stay there and survive). But for me I know that my Father the Holy Trinity is there, Jesus Christ is there, Mother Mary too is there and the Holy Spirit will protect me. So I’m not afraid, I will go and remove the stigma of death from the land to become a land of life so that all people will come there to have life. It shall no longer be called Yentreso, but we will call it Jerusalem Number 2 after the original Jerusalem in the Holy Land.

Wɔfa was convinced and emphatic that the Holy Trinity, the Holy Spirit and the Blessed Virgin Mary would be with him to protect him. He said the place would no longer be Yentreso but Jerusalem Number 2. Death or any kind of danger associated with the place would be removed forever and be replaced with life and peace. The wonders emanating from the place since then are manifestations of Wɔfa’s prophecy. While in his exile he did live to a good old age with several encounters with our Lord through revelation as well as our Lady. Faithful pilgrims have attested to a real living, healing, transforming and empowering encounter with the Lord Jesus.

Indeed, after his exile, Wɔfa did experience the blessed fruit of the Womb of the Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ. And so it is with all those who in faith travel to Jerusalem No. 2. It is always identification with the exile of Wɔfa to Jerusalem No. 2 and then, now and will always be accompanied by a wonderful, beautiful, faith enriching experience of the fruit of Mary’s womb – our Lord Jesus Christ.

Alternative Means of Eliminating Wɔfa

With Wɔfa still having the breath of life in him (alive), the traditional authorities still considered him a threat to the preservation and continuity of the traditional worship, and since it was almost impossible to use physical means in eliminating him, they resorted to the spiritual.

To facilitate the process of eliminating him, the chiefs bought a cow from Bolgatanga to sacrifice to Ntoa, with the hope that the deity would kill George spiritually. The sacrifice was to take place on a Wednesday, but the elders later indicated that the deity would not accept the sacrifice on a Wednesday. The day was then shifted to the Friday of the same week, but on Thursday morning, the cow vanished from where it was tethered. They approached Wɔfa George to help them find the cow and he assured them that it would return on its own. True to his word the cow resurfaced in the evening of the same Thursday. On Friday, the *bosomkyeame* slaughtered the cow in George's name. The following was the *bosomkyeame's* (linguist of the deity) invocation:

“Nana Sesseman Ntoa, nantwie a yɛretwa ama wo yi, Akwasi Adjei nti na yɛretwa ama wo. Na sɛ ɔkɔtena asase no so a, na wo ayɛ no ntɛm ama yɛn, na wo akɔyɛ ne ho adwuma.”

English: Nana Sesseman Ntoa, we are sacrificing this cow to you because of Akwasi Adjei. If he goes to stay on the land, work on him, deal with him without delay.

Death and/or madness were the two possibilities that could result from the sacrifice. Traditionally, such a sacrifice was normally done in the company of only a few notable people and murmuring of words. But in this particular case the sacrifice was performed in the full glare of the public and the incantations made audible. As to why this shift from the norm no one can explain. A young man by name Kwadwo Broni complained about the open display of the act which under normal circumstances and as stipulated by custom should have been performed secretly. His complaint raised passions and in the confusion that ensued, another young man who had accused Kwadwo Broni of being a follower of Wɔfa made ready with a fist to engage him in a fight to beat him up. He was struck with instant madness. Thereafter, he continued to hit at anything he came into contact with until it was detected that he had indeed developed some kind of mental disorder. The fist was made to be directed at objects other than the supposed sympathizer of the man of God, George. He died later at the Ankaful Psychiatric Hospital.

When news about the sacrifice got to Wɔfa's hearing, he pronounced that the symbol of the sacrificial animal (cow) would never depart from Jerusalem No. 2. The following were his prophetic remarks:

“Nantwie no a me nti moaku no ama bosom no, ne nsɛnkyerɛnɛ ɛmpa me nsam da. Mɛkɔ asaase no so no, na ne nsɛnkyerɛne wɔ hɔ dada, na mede bɛkyerɛ nnipa nyinaa akɔsi wiase awiɛ.”

English: The sign/symbol of the cow which you have sacrificed to the god in my name will never depart from my hands, its sign will be ahead of me before I go to settle on the land and I will show it to humanity till the end of time.

True to his words, a crevice in the shape of a cow was to be discovered years later a little beyond the end of the Stations of the Cross. In addition are the symbolic footprints of the cow for the slaughter and the human being holding it to the slaughter.



Wɔfa did prophesy that the symbol of the sacrificial cow which was slaughtered to spiritually eliminate him would never depart from Jerusalem No. 2. When this crevice in the shape of a cow was found years later, it did bring notice to the fact that the prophecy has been fulfilled. It is filled with water during the rainy season but remains dry when the rains cease to come. It is fenced to preserve it in its natural state in which it was discovered. Many have received healing by immersing themselves in it, or by signing themselves with the water or its contents during the dry season. The Lamb of God prayer is recited here after which pilgrims sign themselves with water in it if there is any, before going to the site of the Holy Water.



Symbolic footprints of the sacrificial animal and the one leading it to the slaughter.

Having witnessed the occasion of the sacrifice and perhaps, for fear of what might befall her daughter, the mother-in-law of Wɔfa George at this point concluded that it was not going to end well with her son-in-law. She therefore proposed the marriage be nullified to guarantee her daughter's safety. Disappointed with the proposition, Wɔfa suggested that there shouldn't be any form of communication between him, his wife and in-laws for a year. If after the period of one year nothing bad happened to him, it would be confirmation that Wɔfa had a Divine blessing and protection in all that was happening to him, and the wife would be returned to him. Subsequently, every form of communication between Wɔfa and his wife's family ceased. Many were those who were convinced that Wɔfa George was not going to live long after the performance of the sacrifice. When a whole year passed without any misfortune, Wɔfa presented a token of two fowls through the *bosomkyeame* to his mother-in-law as a sign of appeasement and reconciliation. The family asked Wɔfa to take back one of the fowls. They asked Wɔfa to kill the other one which was given to the wife to prepare a communal meal. Husband, wife and in-laws were reunited and the wife returned to the husband. Ironically, it was this very *bosomkyeame* who had performed the sacrifice to spiritually eliminate Wɔfa who did the mediation.

Emergence of Symbols related to the Deity and the Sacrifice

When Wɔfa came to settle by the First Station of the Cross, he told the few devotees around him that he could sense the operation of a powerful spirit in the area. He said the spirit was in a serious spiritual combat with him. He entered into serious prayer accompanied with penance and fasting to curb its influence on the land. After some time, he called the attention of those with him to an anthill that had just started to form. He told them the anthill was the shrine/abode/home of the spirit which was inhabiting the place. He alluded the spirit to the Ntoa deity (bosom). He explained that before the spirit started its activities around Nkoranza, it settled first on a *dawadawa* tree which was very close to the anthill for some time before moving into Nkoranza town. One of the branches of the *dawadawa* tree was bent and according to Wɔfa, it was the result of the impact of the spirit as it rested on the tree (Wɔfa described it as an enormous, huge and powerful spirit). He said from the bent *dawadawa* tree branch, the spirit then moved into the Nkoranza town and perched a second time on an *Akɔnkɔdɛ* (Ceiba) tree near where the old Nkoranza market is located before taking off finally to start its activities in the entire Nkoranza area. Below the *Akɔnkɔdɛ* tree was the shrine of another deity called Adinkra. This gave the name of the place Adinkra ase.

The anthill continued to grow taller and taller into a very high edifice as can be seen from the picture below. They realized one day that the entire structure had collapsed to the ground level on its own but started to grow again after some time. It collapsed again a second time. Wɔfa said its destruction was a sign that the spirit which was operating over the land had been overcome. Shortly after this second destruction of the anthill, both the *dawadawa* tree at Jerusalem No. 2 and the *Akɔnkɔdɛ* tree at the old Nkoranza market (Adinkra ase) also withered and died around the same time. At the same time, Wɔfa sighted three other stones by the site where the anthill stood. Wɔfa explained that as they were slaughtering the cow they bought before the Ntoa shrine at Sesseman to eliminate him, it was spiritually taking place before the Ntoa deity where the anthill stood. As they were doing

this, the Most Holy Trinity was there to protect Wɔfa, symbolised by the three stones.

It is worthy of note that the shape and form of the anthill is just the way they build the shrines of the Ntoa deity.



Wɔfa in front of the anthill



The three stones representing the Holy Trinity in front of the collapsed anthill

Chapter Three

A NEW LIFE BEGINS AT JERUSALEM NO. 2

The Stations /Way of the Cross, the Trinitarian and other symbols as they were revealed to Wofa.

When all expectations of death were not fulfilled, Wofa George left for Yentreso (Jerusalem No. 2) for good. He moved in alone at first, leaving his wife and children and a few of the early converts at Asempanaye. The Church at Asempanaye was left under the care of Robert Kwadwo Tawiah and Francis Asiedu (Akonta who appropriately heads the team at the Grotto presently). Like Simon Stock (later St. Simon), he took habitation in a stock as his home for some time all alone.¹³ Often, he was scantily-clad with whatever material he could lay hands on, his footwear in particular were improvised with the bark of a tree and the twines (serving as laces) of twining plants. These protected him from the pricks of thorns and the danger posed by ants and reptiles, especially snakes. Later, Father Huisman



Rev. Fr. Willebrordus Henricus Huisman SMA was the Parish Priest of Techiman from 1953 to 1970. He often visited Wofa, listened to him, and gave him words of encouragement and donated clothes and food to him.

¹³. Rev. Albert Joseph Mary Shamon, *Our Lady Teaches About Sacramentals and Blessed Objects*, Ohio, The Riehle Foundation, 1992. Pp 24-25. In pursuit of a pious life, St. Simon Stock at about 12 years of age retired to the woods in south-western England and dwelt in the hollow of an oak tree for over twenty years. That was how Stock came to be his name. While in solitude, our Lord and our Lady revealed themselves to him. When the Carmelites were driven out of Mount Carmel following the defeat of the Crusaders by the Saracens in the Twelfth Century, our Lady used St. Simon Stock to preserve the Carmelite Order in England.

followed up and occasionally provided him with food and clothes, and gave him words of encouragement. Overleaf is Fr. Huisman's picture.

The first person to join him was a Moshi migrant peasant farmer by name Peter Gometeebo. He provided vivid accounts of their encounters as the first people to have stayed on the land. He peacefully passed away on 29th June 2016. Below is his photo which was taken shortly before his death.



Mr. Peter Gometeebo shortly before his death in June 2016

Clearing of the Way/Stations of the Cross

In the early years at Yentreso, Wɔfa received revelations/messages from some regular visitors. As he slept one night he received a revelation in which three white men and a black man appeared to him. The black man held 14 pieces of the Cross, and one of the white men had a cutlass. A second white man held a much bigger Cross. As they approached the Grotto grounds from the road leading from the Nkoranza Township, they stopped at a spot and invited Wɔfa to join them. They explained to him that the reason for all his troubles in life was because he had to fulfil a special mission of continuing and consolidating the work of Jesus Christ. They had come to tell him about his mission on the land. His major task had to do with the Way of the Cross. With the cutlass they cleared, dug, planted the bigger Cross and firmed it. This is the spot where the Trinity symbols are located presently.

He was instructed to clear a path in a straight line in a particular direction from this spot with the Trinitarian symbols and to continue clearing under their guidance and direction, and was not to stop work until he received further instructions from them to do so. At various spots/locations along the path they would come to identify the station and explain the symbols and their significance. He was further assured of the presence and protection of the Holy Trinity and the Blessed Virgin Mary to whom he had made reference at the chief's palace when the pronouncement of his exile was made. Is there a link between the three white men and one black man in the dream and the three white men and one black man physically present who accompanied Wɔfa to the chief's palace for the judgement on Wɔfa?

When he woke up the next morning, he reflected over the whole episode and prayed for a clearer understanding of the events as they were revealed to him in the night. He managed to identify and locate where he was standing and where the first Cross was planted in the dream. He cleared that very spot that very day and found two sets of three big stones/rocks and other smaller ones surrounding them. It was revealed to him that the three big stones represent the Trinity

surrounded by the angels. It was emphasized that this was the Holy Trinity that he made reference to at the traditional court when the exile was pronounced, and that truly he was not going to be alone. The second set of three smaller stones also represents the three chiefs at Nkoranza who sat on his case: *Nkoranzamanhene*, *Sessemmanhene* and *Kissimanhene*, surrounded by their sub-chiefs, elders and courtiers. This same set of stones represents Pilate, Annas and Caiaphas, the key figures who were involved in the trial of Jesus. There is a stone in front of the first set of Trinitarian symbol and a Doba plant in front of the second set. Wofa explained that the stone and the Doba plant represent Jesus coming out of the Trinity to offer Himself for the salvation of the world and Wofa George being condemned by his own chiefs to suffer in a manner like Christ to accomplish his evangelising mission. He was further made to understand that the episode of Jerusalem Number 2 is a re-enactment of what Jesus Christ experienced in Jerusalem in the Middle East – while Jesus was before Pilate and others as well as bearing the burden of the Cross and experiencing the passion, the events were spiritually being replicated in Jerusalem No. 2, and that the name he ascribed to the land Yentreso, **Jerusalem No. 2** as the exile was pronounced, was inspired and prophetic. Therefore, he was going to suffer like Christ but would not be put to death physically since his physical presence was necessary for unraveling the mysteries and symbols of **Jerusalem No. 2** and proclaiming them to the world. The first spot which he cleared is now the very place where pilgrims begin the Way of the Cross. That is the First Station where Jesus is condemned to death before Pontius Pilate.

Worthy of note is the fact that Wofa's first settlement was directly opposite the Trinitarian symbol at the First Station. It was the object of focus for Wofa's private prayers and prayers of dedication of pilgrims to the Trinity. People who had the privilege to share his room with him observed that in the night he would sit with head bowed, and at times held in his hands and directed at the Holy Trinity praying for most part of the night. The Trinity as represented in this First Station has been the heart of all the activities at Jerusalem No. 2.



The two sets of the Trinity Symbols together at the First Station.



The first set of the Trinity Symbol.



The Second Set of the Trinity Symbol.

Another important thing which quickly came to his notice was the presence of the *Doba* plant which he believed to be reminiscent of a specific beloved child, who is Jesus Christ, the beloved Son of God. He established this link between Christ and the plant because *Doba* in the Akan language means beloved child.

After the first day of clearing/weeding the First Station, the others were subsequently revealed to him in dreams. Following the straight course, per the earlier instructions, *Wɔfa* continued with the clearing of the path in the prescribed direction. From time to time, the four regular visitors appeared to explain the symbols that were at each of the Stations he got to. This would be almost immediately after he had cleared the spot. There was a time when *Wɔfa* said the regular celestial visitors in a dream redirected him and showed him the link to the next Station when he had veered off from the prescribed path.

It is worth pointing out that apart from the *Doba* plant, there are other plants at the various Stations which are of equal significance. Thus it

can be found in the environment, some natural objects, (mostly plants and rocks/stones) which are related to Christ, Christian virtues and attitudes, and Christian behaviour in general. For example, the *Dōba* (beloved son) can be found at most of the Stations of the Cross and other places. *Kronkomma* also emphasises on the need to be holy. All these and many others can be found at the various Stations. These will be explained later in the book.

After clearing the Fourteenth Station, his wife was called to eternity. Following the successful clearing of the Way and the proper identification of the Stations of the Cross, Wōfa George was again instructed in a dream to have himself circumcised before the last two symbols could be revealed to him. At the hospital where he went to be circumcised, the nurses wondered why he desperately needed to be circumcised at that advanced age. He could not give a detailed account of his situation but indicated that it was necessary for him to perform it. He was chloroformed, circumcised and he regained consciousness in three days' time.

A little beyond the Fourteenth Station, Wōfa in a dream saw a Crucifix with water and blood gushing forth from the side of our Lord (he saw Christ to be alive in real pain and agony in this revelation). The Crucifix which was lying on top of a cross-shaped trench continued to be raised higher and higher by the level of the water and blood pouring forth from the side of Christ as he remained fixed on the Cross. The trench eventually became filled up with the water and blood with the Crucifix floating. One of the three white men who once again were present at this point asked Wōfa whether he understood what had just been unfolded. His answer was negative. He was further asked whether he had any idea about the source of the water from the side of Christ mentioned in the *Anima Christi*. When he responded that he did not know the source of that water, he was told that what had just been unfolded was symbolic of the "Water from the side of Christ" stated in the *Anima Christi* and that the Angel James is on guard over the water. He was told that people all over the world would come to the Grotto for the water, because it was going to be a source of life for all.

He was duly instructed to encourage anyone who personally visits the Grotto and collects the water not to eat meat on Fridays. But when the water is given to another person or other people for use by the first person who collected it, they are free from this rule. This is like going back to the Old Catholic tradition which was strict with abstinence from meat on Fridays.

As he traced the following morning in search of what was revealed to him in the dream, he came upon a place covered with flowers. And at the spot where the symbol was found in the dream he found a cross-shaped crevice of a sizeable depth. Rain water fed into this crevice is the Holy Water used and given to pilgrims at the Centre. So this Holy water can truly be identified with the blood and water which gushed forth from the side of Jesus when he was pierced with a lance. The efficacy and tremendous benefits from its usage and application are eloquent testimonies to the power of the Blood of Jesus. This is a confirmation of the fact that the blood and water from the side of Jesus is the true source of Divine Mercy.

Beyond this he was directed to where we have another crevice in the shape of a cow which is the symbol of the sacrificial cow that was slaughtered in Wɔfa's name. A prophecy made some years back that its symbol will never depart from the land is duly fulfilled. Rain water that collects in it also has healing benefits. Pilgrims performing the Stations of the Cross end at this point where they sign themselves with the water or contents from the cow symbol to cleanse and purify themselves before they go to collect the Holy Water. The Lamb of God prayer is said here.

At the conclusion of all these revelations concerning the Stations of the Cross and the other symbolic sites, Wɔfa George was inspired to stay put at the Grotto for his mission was stationary by design and only the wonders to spring from there would pull people from afar to God.

Wɔfa was once again instructed as a matter of rule to dedicate all who visit the Grotto to the Holy Trinity.

In keeping to the Divine direction, Wəfa George remained stuck to the Grotto grounds, spoke little and listened more to pilgrims and their concerns, offered advice and direction where it was necessary until his peaceful call to eternity.



A distant view of the area that lies directly ahead of the 14th Station of the Cross. Some of the Holy Flowers can be seen here, as well as the site of the Holy Water at the tail end of the picture.



Wəfa and the first Church he built at the Grotto (left) and the First Crucifix presented by Fr. Huisman SMA to Wəfa when he started the first Church at Asempanaye before he moved to settle at the Grotto (right).



The second Church built by Wəfa and which is the one currently in use.

Obstacles

When it was observed for a long time that the deity was incapable of killing Wəfa, this concrete evidence was not enough to clear the people's wrong impression about him. Some people still considered him as a "mad man" for he was clearing a path that led to nowhere in particular. His attitude became a central theme of discussion among his people often generating debates as to whether he was mad or simply a weird person, but the former was what many thought of him to be. A method was therefore devised to ascertain the truth. On several occasions different people were sent to him with greetings from the Chief and invitation to his residence. The expectation was that the response of one who was really mad would be different from a normal person and that would have formed the basis for declaring him so. They however realised that he responded normally to their greetings and honoured all invitations extended to him by the Chief and at the appropriate times. As it was a deliberate action for a specific purpose, the Chief often held him in some form of conversation and through that was able to deduce for himself that the man was indeed normal. There was real calculation and method in every word that fell from his lips and every deed he performed. Yet the desire to still get rid of him was not abandoned.

In that regard, a migrant hunter by name Issah became the instrument in their next scheme to kill and eliminate him. Accordingly, Issah was to approach Wɔfa as a friend and requested to lodge with him temporarily on account of the proximity of Wɔfa's place to his hunting grounds. If the arrangement worked out well between the two of them, Issah would leave upon catching enough game to sell and return to continue with the relationship on regular basis. For a period of about five days, Issah left very early in the morning and returned in the evening to a meal of whatever Wɔfa laid hands on. Everything went on smoothly until the fifth day when Issah informed his host that he was going to be away till the next morning and there was no need for any food to be kept for him. While Wɔfa was at work during the day, clearing the spot between the Twelfth and Thirteenth Stations, Issah emerged from his hideout with his gun and drew closer to Wɔfa without Wɔfa's notice. In a bid to get relief from his hard work, Wɔfa stood up to stretch himself. Lo and behold!, there stood Issah, a few metres away from him. They exchanged greetings and Issah confessed the evil that had been schemed against Wɔfa. He explained that his temporary stay with him was actually a hatched out plan to acquaint himself with his daily routine to enable him identify where to easily locate him to carry out his murderous intent. He said that he was under instructions by some of the elders and the traditional priests to lay ambush and kill him while he was at work. Before executing the plot, he observed him for some time from a hideout. He observed that before Wɔfa George started work each day, he made the sign of the Cross, bowed a little and said a prayer before he started his daily business of clearing the Way. This reminded Issah of how as a Muslim he also makes bodily signs/gestures quite similar to that made by Wɔfa in prayer. It dawned on him that he was truly a man of God who served the same Allah that he believed in. Therefore, pricked by his conscience, he decided not to execute the evil plot.

Issah prompted Wɔfa George to be on the watch out for his own safety as he believed other attempts might be made once they realised this one had failed. He indicated that he was ready to bear witness to the

case provided Wəfa would take it up. Wəfa in turn cautioned him not to disclose what had transpired between them to the key figures involved, but Issah went contrary to the advice and spilled everything.

As a migrant hunter, Issah benefited from the benevolence of the elders. However, having demonstrated that he could not be trusted in this matter, he was dispossessed of many of his benefits: accommodation, his wife who was a native, as well as the gun with which he conducted his business of hunting. For fear of his own life, Issah relocated to Techiman and returned some years later to visit Wəfa. He was happy to find out that Wəfa was in good health and that Jerusalem No. 2 was growing and developing. He reiterated that Wəfa was a true man of God and the land (Jersalem No. 2), a truly “promised land”.

More Obstacles and Challenges

One would think that in the wild dangerous environment against a background in which all attempts to stop the introduction of Christianity/Catholicism had failed, Wəfa George being the instrument of the evangelising effort, would be spared to continue with his mission. Sadly, however, many more obstacles emerged and armed with nothing but FAITH in the one who has called him, he secured the “New Jerusalem” which is now a spiritual home for many pilgrims.¹⁴

One of these obstacles was an order by the chiefs and elders that under no circumstance should anyone provide Wəfa with food. He was then alone in the forest during this time. For fear of intimidation, no person was courageous enough to defy the order in the very close neighbourhoods despite the marked presence of genuine sympathisers. Only one woman from a nearby village, Senya had volunteered to provide food occasionally to the man in solitude. The long distance to the Grotto became a hindrance and she relapsed after a few visits. From then onwards, he had to do with whatever food that was available in the wild environment.

¹⁴The ones which are cited in this text are selected ones. Not all can be contained in this single volume.

On one occasion, the *bosomkyeame* invited Wɔfa and his friend, Opanin Kofi Fofie to his residence. Opanin Kofi Fofie was domiciled at Brahɔhoɔ but visited Wɔfa from time to time. Well aware of whom they truly were, he asked all the same ‘Are you the one called Kwasi Agyei?’ Wɔfa answered in the affirmative to be followed by a similar question for Opanin Kofi Fofie who also responded in the fashion of Wɔfa. Throughout the discourse, both hands of the *bosomkyeame* were hidden in the cloth with which he had covered himself. Unfortunately for him, the cloth opened up, revealing a small object tied at the middle of a rope with the man holding unto the rope at both ends. Apparently, he had been secretly pulling the rope at both ends to tighten up the object. The rope got torn because of the force of the pull causing the cloth to open up exposing the *bosomkyeame*’s nakedness. The whole episode was a manifestation of a well-known practice among the people.

The object is believed to be a doll or a figurine (*bodua* in Akan). Traditionally, it is used to either inflict pain, cause misfortune to befall an enemy, or kill a victim or target spiritually. The *bodua* is made to represent the victim spiritually so that whatever the spiritualist wishes (sickness, death or any other misfortune), manifests in the human target, by incantations, binding and the pulling of the string to tighten it. In this case, Wɔfa and his friend Kofi Fofie were the *Bosomkyeame*’s targets. He was binding them as he mentioned their names by his purported quiz to know their names. He took leave of them to dress up. When he returned, he shamefacedly explained thus:

Nkɔmmɔ a ɛno nti mefrɛ mo ɛ mommra ma yenni no, ennya mma so ɛnɛ. ɛno nti monkwɔ na ɛda foforo mɛfrɛ mo.

English: The issue for which reason I called you cannot be discussed today. So go and I will call you another day.

Wɔfa replied that:

Wiase tumi ɛne Onyakopon tumi ɛnnyɛ pɛ, na wokae ɛ yɛku me anaa. Anka menna so ntease ɛbɛ pem ɛnnɛ.

English: Worldly power and Divine power are not the same. Do you think I can easily be killed? If it were so I would not be alive today (apparently Wɔfa was drawing his attention to the previous efforts at getting rid of him).

Consequently, Wɔfa and his friend took leave of him.

A Nigerian Muslim sojourner at Nkoranza became one of the agents of the adversaries of Wɔfa. The Nigerian who was widely known to be one imbued with mystical powers was contacted to help eliminate or kill Wɔfa. The man's attempt failed and he had to confess to his clients that anytime that he tried with a magic mirror to command the spirit of Wɔfa, water appeared instead of Wɔfa's spirit. He therefore concluded that no form of manipulation by any human effort could kill him until God's own appointed time. The medicine man confessed that Wɔfa had a special mission from his maker to accomplish. Nobody could therefore subvert God's plans. The news circulated for a while in town to the amazement of many people.

Early Episodes of Healing and Miracles

One of the earliest miracles which occurred at the Grotto had to do with one of the nephews of Wɔfa. He was approached one day by a sister, mother of the said nephew with a problem concerning her son. She had wanted Wɔfa to accompany her to consult a god concerning her son's sickness. As an uncle in a matrilineal society, Wɔfa was required by tradition to attend to the welfare of members of his mother's lineage, especially nephews and nieces who are his rightful legatees. In this case the nephew's mother was his direct elder sister and there was no way he could decline from helping to find a cure for his nephew. Wɔfa, however declined to get involved with any other power apart from his newfound spiritual resource (God).

He eventually managed to convince them to join him in prayer after which the young nephew was left under his care. Through continuous prayer of the Rosary and the Stations of the Cross, he received healing and decided to remain with his uncle (Wɔfa) for some time. He later took leave of Wɔfa to start life anew.

On his way to Nkoranza one day, Wɔfa met a group of people mourning over a dead child of about six years old believed to have been hastened to death by convulsion at Asempanaye. Wɔfa was so much touched by the grief-stricken mother that he decided to intervene with prayer but some family members claimed the child was long dead and nothing could bring him back to life. To prove them wrong, he ignored their disbelief and prayed over the child.

After praying the Lord's Prayer and the Hail Mary silently over the child, he made a vocal prayer thus: "Father, this is the devil's doing to discredit your good work, but you reign supreme over the devil. Therefore, demonstrate your love and power in the matter of this child." He then removed the cloth which was used to cover the child and he was found to have started breathing. He came back to life with a slight defect in one of his legs which has since remained so. The story is still being told today and the child, now an adult, Francis Kwame Amoah is still alive as we write, and is married with children, and also a regular pilgrim to the Grotto.



Now an adult, Francis Amoah was saved at about the age of six through Wɔfa's intervention/intercession when his own people had already declared him dead and were in a state of mourning.

There is this moving story about the healing of Thomas Kwaku Nsiah from Tuobodom near Techiman. He was mentally deranged and had been put in shackles to restrain his movement. It happened that one woman who had heard about Jerusalem No. 2 came to suggest to two sisters of Kwaku Nsiah to send him to the Grotto (Jerusalem No. 2) for healing. The woman tried to convince the sisters that the healing powers of God at Jerusalem No. 2 through the man of God in charge could restore him to normalcy. Their response was “**Kwaku Nsiah a w’asɛ awie yi**”, that there was no hope for Kwaku Nsiah, he was beyond recovery. They told their Good Samaritan that they would rather find time and go there to pray for themselves and their children. This was on a Wednesday morning and Kwaku Nsiah overheard the conversation. He therefore prayed silently thus ‘*Jerusalem Nyame, ɛ wote ase na wonim ɛ mɛnsɛ nwiɛ a, ma me nni kan nya won na sa me yarɛ*’ (the God of Jerusalem No. 2, if you are alive and you know that I’m not beyond recovery/healing, lead me to yourself ahead of my sisters and grant me healing). This was a faith-filled prayer and a challenge to the God of Jerusalem No. 2 to let the whole world hear and see what He can do. They gave Kwaku Nsiah some food and water and left for their farms. Upon their return, they found out Kwaku had refused to eat. He refused to eat anything on this Wednesday and the Thursday and Friday following. This was an inspirational fasting and according to Kwaku Nsiah, he repeated the very prayers to the God of Jerusalem throughout these days. On the afternoon of the Friday, the shackles were broken on their own. With the shackles in his pocket, he decided to find his way to Jerusalem No. 2. He managed to find his way to Techiman unnoticed by his relatives. Standing around the lorry station, he overheard some women calling a driver to take them to Jerusalem No. 2 for prayers. He approached them and begged to be carried along and they willingly agreed to his plea. Upon arrival, Wɔfa first attended to the women who apparently were regular visitors to the place. Wɔfa performed the dedication rite for Kwaku Nsiah and asked him to join him in praying the Stations of the Cross, while he explained the symbols at the various Stations to him. When they finished and got to the cow-shaped crevice, Wɔfa

offered a prayer and fetched the water with his hands and poured on his forehead three times. On their way back, Kwaku prompted Wɔfa and they stopped at the Confessional Seat where he told Wɔfa his whole story. He showed him the shackles which he had put in his pocket. Kwaku Nsiah was particular about the Confessional Seat and the Dɔba plant, stressing that it was the beloved Son of God Jesus Christ (symbolically being represented all over the place by the Dɔba) who answered him when he prayed at home and led him to Jerusalem No. 2. Kwaku again said that if the Confessional Seat is where Christ is seated welcoming sinners, then He could identify himself as a beneficiary of God's Divine Mercy and forgiveness. He further noted that right after the pouring of the water on his forehead, he could sense he had been healed entirely, and that if he had been found worthy to be forgiven and had his shackles and burdens loosened and healed, then everybody who comes to Jerusalem with every burden of sin and needs will find favour with Nyame Dɔba Christ (beloved Son of God), and that he is giving the Son of God an appellation ***Otutu apa. Kristo eyɛ Otutu apa*** (Christ the Remover of Shackles). He then nailed his broken shackles on a Dɔba tree near the confessional seat as his testimony encouraging everyone who comes to Jerusalem No. 2 to have faith that what the Lord had done for him He could do for everyone, and that what people may consider as hopeless or useless God can restore. Wɔfa told him it was his faith that had healed him and that he no longer had any illness.

Anthony Agyei who is presently a catechist/assistant at the Grotto stayed on after experiencing an episode of healing. His marriage which did not produce a child compelled him and his spouse to visit the Grotto. Apart from their situation of childlessness, his wife also developed a swelling in the abdomen that protruded like a pregnancy. They had searched for healing for about two years without any positive result. Each time the wife visited a doctor at the hospital, the diagnosis could not point to any sickness and she would indeed appear normal, yet as soon as she took leave of the doctor the sickness would appear

again. As they continued in their search for healing, a concerned person directed them to Jerusalem No. 2. Upon arrival they prayed with Wɔfa after personal dedication. His wife later had a dream in which she had an encounter with two priests and Wɔfa. After making enquiries concerning her ailment, one of the priests in the dream placed his hand on her abdomen and offered a prayer. She woke up in the morning to realise that the swollen abdomen had shrunk and had collected on one side. Wɔfa asked her to bathe in the cow-shaped crevice and to use the Holy Water. Two weeks following this, the swelling disappeared completely. The couple was then advised by Wɔfa to have Holy Matrimony and they obliged and received the Sacrament. After the wedding, the wife had another dream in which a woman she identified to be the Virgin Mary held out a baby boy to her. She was told that the time was due to have her own children. That she would give birth on a Thursday (Yaw) and he would be called George. Conception soon followed and a baby boy, Yaw was born. Later, she had another dream in which the Virgin Mary appeared and revealed the birth of four more children which came to pass. Anthony since then has remained a life-long catechist/assistant



Anthony Agyei (middle), wife (right) and daughter, Vero (left). Following a miraculous healing for his wife he decided to remain and work for God. He worked closely with Wɔfa until his passing on and presently serves as catechist at the Grotto.

at the Grotto. He worked for quite some time with Wōfa before the latter passed on.¹⁵

Anthony Agyei again recalled another healing episode involving a woman, Yaa Anane from Akomadan. She suffered from a chronic sore and once while on a visit to one of the villages near Jerusalem No. 2, she was directed to the Grotto. There, Wōfa gave her the Holy Water to apply it to the sore but cautioned seriously against boiling since treating sores with hot water is a widespread traditional method. She one day forgot and while attempting to boil the water, it turned into blood. She quickly ran to the Grotto and made a confession to Wōfa. After Wōfa had said a prayer over the water turned to blood, it was restored to its original form (water). Gazing at the sore for some time, Wōfa made the Sign of the Cross over it and advised the woman to continue with the Holy Water therapy. She was healed of her sore in some few days time.

From Akomadan, another woman Maame Mary Frema visited the Grotto and received her healing. She had a problem of infertility and at the hospital, her doctor asked her to prepare for surgery. She had suffered from an extraordinary protruded abdomen for seven years. She visited the Grotto for prayers as one of her preparations towards the surgery. She prayed for our Lady's intercession to prevent the surgery, but said that even if it had to take place, she should be granted the grace to go through it safely. Not long after leaving the Grotto, and while at hospital awaiting surgery, she reportedly dreamt and saw a Reverend Sister in the company of other female nurses who revealed their intention of performing surgery on her. The doctor in charge was surprised to detect during the last examination before the surgery that there was no longer any trace of the problem that was earlier detected. She was duly discharged since there was no longer the need for any surgery.

¹⁵Anthony Agyei personally gave this testimony in the presence of other catechists/assistants and Eno Mary, the only surviving daughter of Wōfa at the Grotto on 22nd February 2014.

From Akrofuom near Techiman, a woman carried the message about Jerusalem No. 2 across the frontiers of Ghana to Abidjan in Cote D'Ivoire. The woman who developed boils all over her body was taken by her son then domiciled in Abidjan for treatment. Other attempts in Ghana had failed. She was brought back to the country still not cured of her ailment. Having been told of Jerusalem No. 2, she came, and her condition was so bad that Wɔfa led her through the Stations of the Cross. At the last spot where the exercise usually ends, the woman bathed in the water contained in the cow-shaped crevice and it was observed that the boils had dried up. She had been made whole. She is reported to have in her jubilant mood ignored the male presence, and in her nudity leaped for joy and excitement. She returned to Abidjan to give the testimony of her healing and that brought the inflow of pilgrims from Cote d'Ivoire.

One day, some of the pilgrims from Cote d'Ivoire came to complain to Wɔfa that the remainder of their Holy Water had turned into blood. Wɔfa asked whether they had used the water for other things for which it was not prescribed. They confessed that back in their country, some of them started to sell the Holy Water from the Grotto. One day, they woke up to meet the threat of thunder as the peals of it ripped through the rooms of all those who were in the habit of selling the water. In addition to the threat of thunder, they saw that the remainder of the water had turned into blood, compelling them to rush to the Grotto. When they finished with their confession, Wɔfa asked them why they decided to sell water that was given to them for free. He told them that the Holy Water is the blood and water from the side of Jesus and that Christ was not meant for sale.

So His blessings, graces and objects used to solicit his Divine interventions are not meant to be sold. He has given freely so they must be given freely. Anything related to Him should not be sold. Wɔfa then asked them to bring the water to Him for observation. He realized that the water was in its original form as it was given to them.

Chapter Four

SYMBOLS, RITES OF SANCTIFICATION AND INTERCESSION

From liturgy to dogma, the Catholic Church thrives on symbols and this finds expression in many ways at Jerusalem No. 2. These symbols represent a deeper reality.

The Land and Choice of Name

What inspired or informed the chiefs to specifically and emphatically donate the Yentreso land in the midst of three rivers as Wɔfa's land of exile could be none other than Divine Providence. Unknown to the players in the drama in the imposition of exile, the chiefs as traditional and legitimate caretakers of a section of God's created land under their jurisdiction, were providentially guided to give back to God's appointed instrument (Wɔfa George) a particular portion of their land prepared and dedicated by Him.

Why did Wɔfa George not in any way resist moving into the forest knowing very well that he could on his own have chosen to go elsewhere? What was the source of his fearlessness or courage to move alone into a place then called *asaasebɔne* (evil land)? The fact that all the symbols cited were on the land but had to be discovered through revelation and guidance confirms that God was/is involved in the whole exercise. In this land of exile, according to the chiefs, the beliefs and practices of the new religion (Christianity/Catholicism) would not conflict with those of the traditional religion. This was indeed an unconscious endorsement by the chiefs and elders, and traditional priests that this particular land was unique.

This was quite significant because a land in the midst of three rivers was/is rare to find. But more relevant is the fact that at the beginning of creation, God separated water from land and made man to live on

the land. The separation of the land from the three rivers could not have been accidental. The land from creation was so designed to serve a specific purpose. This purpose could not have been any other than what we are experiencing today. This makes Jerusalem No. 2 a unique land (a world of its own kind). It is therefore no wonder that Wɔfa predicted Jerusalem No. 2 to be a new city of God, a new city of the Church, a new promised land, and truly, a New Jerusalem on earth, not the heavenly.

Wɔfa's vision of the land also confirms its strong ties with the Catholic Church

- a true reflection of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Projecting into the future, Wɔfa consistently emphasized that the Church at JerusalemNo. 2, is intrinsically bound to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church with the Pope as the head. He further insisted that the Church would take control of the place at the appropriate time. No wonder that he gifted the entire land to the Church through the late Bishop, Most Reverend James Kwadwo Owusu, then Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Sunyani before finally sealing it with a will. Like a mantra, Wɔfa had always emphasised that Jerusalem No. 2 is for the Catholic Church, and not for his family or any group of individuals or an individual. Indeed, the totality of the man Wɔfa and what he stood for reflected Catholic teaching and theology.

Jerusalem No. 2 has indeed become a symbol of a 'Promised Land' so that faced with persecution, challenges, needs and troubles of any kind, one with faith finds refuge there. The portion of land surrounded by the Rivers Krutu, Fia and Ofuofo is what is called Jerusalem No. 2, because this is the area to which Wɔfa was exiled. When Wɔfa finally settled in and with the subsequent revelation of the First Station where the Holy Trinity is pre-eminently and symbolically represented, he realised that his mission was of a spiritual sort. With prayer as key and central to his mission, he assigned the name Holy Trinity Prayer Center to his settlement, mission and work. Holy Trinity is the obvious

choice since its symbol was the first and major one to be revealed to him. It was after the late Most Reverend James Kwadwo Owusu had listened to how the Sacred Heart Symbol was revealed to Wɔfa so many years later, that they both agreed that ‘Sacred Heart of Jesus Prayer Center/Grotto was more appropriate. In the mind of the Bishop, the Diocese already had a Marian Grotto at Asueyi (Techiman) and also needed a centre of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He indeed had the intention of giving it a national character/status. Therefore, Holy Trinity Prayer Centre was replaced with Sacred Heart of Jesus Grotto-Jerusalem No. 2. To maintain the Trinitarian linkage the local church at Jerusalem No. 2 is designated Holy Trinity Catholic Church.

One of the early miracles which Wɔfa oftentimes brought to the ears of people to confirm the work of the Holy Trinity at Jerusalem No. 2 had to do with a woman who visited the Grotto with a health problem. Wɔfa’s residence was then located at a close distance opposite the First Station where the Trinitarian symbols are also located. The woman approached Wɔfa and asked, “*honhom bɛn na wode no reyɛ adwuma yi?*” (what kind of spirit are you working with in this mission?) Wɔfa then led her to the symbolic stones of the Trinity, and while pointing to these Wɔfa said “*Honhom a mede no reyɔ adwuma no nie, Nyame Agya, Nyame Ōba, Nyame Sunsum Kronkron – Baasafua Kronkron no, ɔnie.*” (this is the spirit with whom I work, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit – this is the most Holy Trinity). Indeed, Wɔfa emphasised while pointing to the Trinitarian Symbols, that “this is the most Holy Trinity.” In response to what Wɔfa had said, the woman responded on top of her voice, “**Amen! Amen! Amen!**” and trying to hold herself up quickly ran away from the site. The woman’s strange behaviour initially left him astounded, but she returned in a short time dressed up in new attire. Within a short distance from Wɔfa, she enquired from him whether it was safe and acceptable to get closer. Still in a state of surprise at the woman’s strange behaviour he assured her she could draw nearer to him. Only then was the woman’s intention for visiting the Grotto brought to light. Her menstrual cycle had ceased for years even though she was

quite young and of child-bearing age. Unable to bear children because of the unfortunate situation, she had visited various healing centres and spiritualists for cure but to no avail. She had therefore visited the Grotto to seek healing for her affliction. People who wield spiritual powers have particular gods, deities or spirits they work with and which are the sources of their miraculous powers and healings. This explains the woman's quest to know the spirit Wɔfa works with.

The woman said she experienced a sudden flow of blood at the very moment Wɔfa said "this is the most Holy Trinity", and that was why she shouted "Amen" three times, and quickly left in that strange manner to have herself cleaned up. Her enquiry to know if she could draw closer is also rooted in the beliefs of some religions that women in their period of menstruation are considered as unclean and therefore seen to be unfit to be in contact with what is sacred.¹⁶ Wɔfa assured her that this was not an abomination but rather the evil in people which makes them unclean before God and not such natural processes like menstruation and that if it was an abomination she would have been struck there and then after experiencing the flow. This woman happily had an instant solution to her many years problem at the mention of the 'Most Holy Trinity'. An analogy can be made between the case of this woman and the woman who was healed of twelve years of haemorrhage by touching the cloak of Jesus (Mark 5: 25-34, Matthew 9: 20-22, Luke 8: 43-48). It was the woman's faith in Jesus and not the cloak that healed her. Similarly, in this case, it was the 'Most Holy Trinity', who is behind all activities at the Sacred Heart of Jesus Grotto that made healing possible. It was like the woman getting into living contact with the most Holy Trinity at Wɔfa's words. In both cases, it was faith and believe in the power of God that made healing possible. Wɔfa used this to explain the power behind all happenings at Jerusalem No. 2, - that of the **MOST**

¹⁶Debrunner, Hans W., *A History of Christianity in Ghana*, Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1967. P 347. Debrunner makes reference to an instance of this at a prayer retreat centre at Etodome, near Kpale, north-west of Ho in the Volta Region of Ghana. Women in their period of menstruation were prohibited from entering the prayer centre.

HOLY TRINITY and that alone.¹⁷ Indeed, pilgrims are often reminded never to mince words at all in proclaiming that Jerusalem No. 2 rests on the power of the Holy Trinity, and ultimately the power of God. There is no other power at work here apart from God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus Symbol

Wofa's passionate devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the manner in which the Sacred Heart of Jesus Symbolic Stone was revealed are enough indicators to name the place after the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The last of the revelations concerning the symbols was the symbolic stone of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to which Wofa drew the attention of the then Bishop of Sunyani, the late Most Reverend James Kwadwo Owusu. The Bishop brought it to the notice of the Vatican, prompting the Pope (Pope St. John Paul II) to donate the Sacred Heart Statue which is duly erected at its present location.

The revelation of the Sacred Heart symbol occurred on a Friday in 1993. The three white men (the regular visitors) appeared to Wofa in a dream and told him that they had come to reveal the remainder of the symbols which was the last in the series to him. In the dream they beckoned him to follow them. They led him to a spot where he saw a plain white cloth with the body of Jesus lying on it.

They explained that this was where Jesus was placed when he was taken down from the Cross. The body with the wounds was being cleansed. In the course of the cleansing, he saw the pierced side and could see the wounded Heart through the opening as the left arm was raised. They told him this is the Heart that has loved humankind unto death. It was this precious and Sacred Heart that was left to be shown to him.

¹⁷These two experiences further throw more light on and justify the use of sacramentals or blessed objects by Catholics in particular. Many non-Catholics see the use of sacramentals or blessed objects (medals, scapular etc) to be non-Christian, but as can be seen in both cases, the power that brought the healing was neither the cloak of Jesus nor the person of Wofa, but the One in Whose name they work - GOD.

After the cleansing they told him they were taking the body to mother Mary to behold him in her hands before he would be taken to the place of burial. As the body was lifted and taken away, he could vividly see the image of Christ with his hand beholding the Heart left behind on the spot where He laid.

When Wofa woke up in the morning he told Akonta it was left with one of the symbols which had been revealed to him, and they had to search for it. He took Akonta along with him in the search. He stopped at a spot between the 12th and the 13th Stations of the Way of the Cross. He moved a little further into the bush along the path. He indicated that this was the area that was shown to him in the dream. He asked Akonta to go for a cutlass. He asked him to weed a particular area and clear the weeds. He asked him again to go for a hoe. He directed him to dig a particular spot with the hoe. As he continued to dig, the top part of a stone lying beneath the soil came into view.



This symbol represents the body of Christ brought down from the Cross and laid on a cloth to be prepared for reception by the mother. An important aspect of it is the display of our Lord's Heart that has so much loved humanity to the point of death. Beside the stone is the Sacred Heart Statue donated by Pope St. John Paul II.

Wōfa exclaimed, “*Adæ a merepæ no nie*” (This is what I’m looking for). Upon close examination, they found the image of the Sacred Heart engraved on that portion of the underlying rock. Further digging, rainfall and erosion gradually revealed the full complement of the image – the Body, the Heart, the Cloth and the Seam.

Symbolically, the stone that spreads over the area represents the cloth on which they placed Jesus when he was removed from the Cross. The imprint of the body as he laid on the cloth is left to be seen and coincidentally the engraved heart is located at its natural position close to the chest and the hand. It is a current revelation to which the earlier pilgrims attest. It gives credence to the fact that the symbols were there already before Wōfa went to settle there. This makes the mission at Jerusalem No. 2 providential – it confirms the prophetic role of Wōfa. God has used him as his instrument to reveal his hidden treasure to humanity. A line on the rock represents the seam that joins the cloth together- an indication that it was a real cloth that was woven and put together. The line also signifies a spiritual barrier to be crossed or a hurdle to be cleared before one can get into real union with Christ. For instance, the sacrifices and denials one has to impose on himself/herself in order to receive baptism, Holy Communion and Holy Matrimony and to be in real communion with the Lord. Wōfa also compared it to Noah’s Ark where those who had faith and heeded the call joined and were saved. It is individuals who appreciate the tremendous love Jesus has shown us (symbol of His Heart) and are ready to return love for love who go all out to enter into His heart/communion with the Lord. As already indicated it is located between the 12th and the 13th Stations- the proper designation for this particular symbol.



Unveiling of the Sacred Heart Statue (donated by Pope St. John Paul II) by his Lordship Dominic Yeboah Nyarko, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Techiman, assisted by Fr. Andy, then Parish Priest of the Nkoranza Parish, on 4th December, 2009.



From (left to right), Fr. Andy, Marciana Kuusaana, Anthony Adjei, Philip Awaana and Francis Asiedu (Akonta), by the Sacred Heart Statue during field work in August 2016.

Crossing a River (*Asutwerɛ*)

When Wɔfa moved into settlement near the First Station of the Cross, he considered it a temporary home even though he stayed there for many years. He compared his search for a permanent place of abode to the Israelites' journey to the Promised Land. He and the pilgrims had a "Red Sea" to cross, prompting him to coin this passage *Asutwerɛ* (crossing of a river). So from the first settlement he moved to a location near the Twelfth Station of the Cross where he had put up a more proper place of accommodation. This was in late 1998. He still did not consider it a permanent settlement for himself and the pilgrims on the Holy Grounds. Wɔfa considered it as a place of momentary rest in this passage to the Promised Land which he called *ahomegyɛ mu*. In February 1999, he invited devotees to come and symbolically journey with him to the permanent place of settlement for himself and the pilgrims. Devotees responded massively to his call and on an appointed date they came in their numbers. He sat on a donkey-driven cart while some of the devotees carried his belongings and journeyed with him to the place which was to be his last home on the land until his death in early 2001. It was considered as identification with Wɔfa on his journey to his permanent settlement on the land of exile. Two types of "crossing" can be seen here – one has to do with identification with Wɔfa in his decisive movement to the designated land of exile, and the second is the search for a permanent place of settlement on the designated land of exile. After Wɔfa had finally settled at this permanent place, he invited the late Bishop James Kwadwo Owusu through the then Parish Priest of Nkoranza, Msgr. John Kwame Nkrumah to visit him on the 3rd of September, 1999.



Remnant of Wɔfa's first house at the Grotto Wɔfa's 2nd house near the 12th Station of the Cross

Some scenes during Wofa's Crossing from his second home by the Twelfth Station to his permanent home.



Wofa and his few belongings being conveyed by some pilgrims to his new house.



Wofa in a donkey-driven cart moving towards the new house. Fr. Andy was there to be part of the symbolic Crossing.



Wofa, Akonta and some pilgrims in a donkey-driven cart (right), Fr. Andy (middle), Eno Mary holding a bag and a lantern (left), and other pilgrims in the background during the Crossing.



Wofa after the crossing with some of his assistants and the two Catholic priests (Fr. Andy and Rev. Fr. Prof. John Appiah Opoku) who were there to be part of the event.

Red/Crimson/Violet Colour

When Wofa eventually settled to start his mission, he suggested to Rev. Fr. Huisman SMA, then Parish Priest of St. Paul's Catholic Church, Techiman (1953-1970) that he wanted to have an identification uniform of red colour to be worn by him. The red colour was his inspired choice because it was symbolic of the suffering and pain he had endured.

He explained that his mission has a direct bearing with the Stations of the Cross (*Mmeamudua Akwantuo*), the Holy Trinity, the Sacred Heart of Jesus and indeed many of what Christ represents. He believed red colour would reflect the hardship and danger involved in a mission of this nature. From conversion until his transition into glory, Wɔfa indeed 'experienced numerous trials and tribulations but these did not cut short his mission. Various attempts to eliminate him failed because God protected him to fulfil a mission to which we are all witnesses today. His entire life was an unbloody martyrdom. Father granted his consent explaining that he should follow through what he had been inspired to do. This is the reason why he decided to have a dress code of red colour.

However, he started using the red uniform long before it became customary for the others who were closely working with him to also use it. One day, he called all the assistants and informed them of the need to follow his example and wear the red uniform. Like Christ who worked with a selected group of people (apostles), he followed the same example to ensure the continuity of the mission after his death. He asked them, one after the other to seek their consent in this matter, and unanimously, they agreed to use it. When it was decided that his assistants should follow his dress code, it was Reverend Father John Nkrumah, then Parish Priest of St. Martin De Porres, Nkoranza who was invited to bless the uniforms. Wɔfa referred to the red hat worn by his male assistants as '*Nkasɛɛ Kyɛ*', meaning Crown of Thorns symbolising the one that was put on Christ during His torture. So he and all those who agree to wear it are therefore ready to put on the Crown of Thorns and suffer with the Lord in living out their faith in the various states of their calling and mission in life.

Significantly and coincidentally, his choice of red colour takes after Church tradition. It is the colour of blood and therefore signifies martyrdom. So on important occasions like the Feast of Martyrs, Good Friday/celebration of Christ's Passion, the Catholic clergy usually wear vestments of red colour when celebrating the Liturgy. Traditionally, red is one of the colours often used during periods of mourning, distress, danger, suffering, pain and other sorrowful occasions.

It is for these reasons that during the Friday Congregational Prayers, the uniformed assistants/catechists become conspicuous in their red/violet colours as one approaches the Grotto. Both males and females are garbed in red. The statue of the enthroned Christ donated by Pope John Paul II depicts the same colour. Female pilgrims who are members of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Confraternity are also encouraged to cover their heads with a red scarf.

The red colour also symbolises the blood our Lord shed for our salvation. The heart is the blood bank of the human being without which life is impossible.



Wofa in a group picture with some of his assistants in their red uniform. These are men and women from diverse backgrounds who willingly agree to meet at the Grotto monthly to assist in the congregational activities.



Francis Asiedu (Akonta), Eno Mary and some assistants currently helping at the Grotto.

Trinitarian Symbols/ Events related to the Holy Trinity

1. Nkoranza – The name is derived from *Nkɔkoraa mmiɛnsa* (three old men). It was founded by three men from Amakom, Nana Baffoe, Nana Sesse and Nana Kusi. Amakom is one of the early settlements in modern Kumasi in the Ashanti Region. It is therefore not a surprise that parishioners from the St. Paul Parish at Amakom patronise the Grotto and some of them play key roles in running the Grotto.
2. The continuous appearance of three white men in revelations as well as at the court scene - They are symbolic of the Holy Trinity or the three Archangels: Gabriel, Michael and Raphael.
3. There are three Rivers that surround the Grotto, namely Krutu, Fia and Ofuofu. God has therefore created His own natural barriers. At the beginning of creation, the land was separated from the waters. Jerusalem is seen as a ‘new world’ of its own.
4. Primarily, Holy Water, Flower and Soil are the materials applied/ used by pilgrims– Each has its unique application with tremendous spiritual and material benefits. They all work for the common good of believers.
5. As a child, Wɔfa was honoured/saluted with three gun shots as a prospective hero among his people. What prompted his maternal grandfather to bestow such honour at this tender age is not quite clear, but from all considerations, the act was Divine in nature.
6. Wɔfa regained consciousness in three days after circumcision.
7. Three key figures witnessed against Wɔfa. They were the Chief of Asempanaye, Nana Kwatia Poku and two other elders, Kofi Badu and Kwaku Fokuo.
8. Three chiefs sat on his case. They were Nana *Nkoranzamanhene*, Nana *Sessemanhene* and Nana *Kisimanhene*. These three chiefs supervised the trial, pronounced the sentence and saw to the implementation of Wɔfa’s exile that was imposed.

9. The fact that the symbol of the Most Holy Trinity was the first to be revealed is significant. The Trinity (God Head) and the 'trinity' (three chiefs) offered/sacrificed their own sons - Jesus and Wəfa George respectively. There appears a kind of partnership between the Divine Trinity (God Head) and the 'earthly trinity' (three chiefs of Nkoranza). So the fact of Jerusalem No. 2 being situated in Nkoranza is not accidental but providential.
10. The symbolic Trinitarian features of the two *Doba*. The two *Doba* trees at the Twelfth Station of the Cross establishing a very strong link between Wəfa's mission and that of Jesus Christ as both being works of the Holy Trinity.
11. The three stones symbolising the Holy Trinity by the anthill.

Symbols/Events related to the Passion/Friday Symbols

1. The birth of a male son, Simon was on Friday. His birth did not follow the natural order of child birth as it took place only a little over five months from conception. Also, he was so named because Wəfa believed that like Simon of Cyrene who helped Jesus carry his cross, many obstacles were going to be removed following his birth. The traditional marriage rites were done by a friend, Holy Matrimony and reception of Holy Communion followed, and departure of wife to eternity paving the way for a fuller commitment to his mission.
2. The judgment of Wəfa was pronounced on Friday. The connection between this particular judgment and that of our Lord Jesus Christ is that, unlike Christ, it did not result in physical death. Our Lord by His death had wrought our salvation. If it had been purported by God for Wəfa to die like the way many of the martyrs died, it surely would have happened so. In his case however, God's mission for him was to lead all people to His "Holy Land - Jerusalem No. 2." The mission was to engage in spiritual battle to overpower and overcome the spiritual forces that had entrenched its hold on the Yentreso land, as well as the prophetic role of revealing the rich mysteries and symbols of faith hidden therein. Wəfa was the primary agent/instrument for this onerous task.

3. The Sacrificial cow was slaughtered on Friday by the traditionalists to spiritually eliminate Wəfa George. They had initially planned to slaughter the cow on a Wednesday but had to shift it to a Friday.
4. Issah's attempt to murder Wəfa occurred on a Friday in between the Twelfth and Thirteenth Stations of the Cross.
5. Revelation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Symbol occurred on Friday.
6. The first Friday of each month marks the climax of congregational activities which usually begin on Tuesday.
7. On a certain Friday morning, Wəfa instructed all residents of the Grotto not to leave their homes but to stay indoors until they received further instructions from him. Before any further instructions could follow there came an unusually heavy storm which uprooted both big trees and small plants and caused extensive damage in the immediate surroundings. When the storm ceased, Wəfa assembled the people and thanked God, explaining that by obeying his instructions, they had saved themselves from possible harm. He further explained how he was cautioned about the impending danger in a dream at dawn on that Friday. In the dream, he saw little children wrapped with cloth up to the waist level. These little children, by just a touch with the hand went about uprooting trees in the environment. He saw the dream to be a sign of danger and was inspired to give the instructions that averted any calamity or fatality.

From this and other examples, we learn that Jerusalem No. 2 is God's own creation that has come to stay, and therefore not liable to any form of destruction by any other force. In reference to the event concerning the sacrifice to spiritually cause the death of Wəfa, Divine intervention brought about postponement of the day of the sacrifice from Wednesday to Friday. The sacrifice on this particular Friday did not achieve its purpose of eliminating Wəfa. The symbolism of him being spiritually sacrificed on a Friday, the day the Lord Jesus offered himself in sacrifice to the Father for our salvation is very significant.

It is therefore not by chance that the first Friday of every month marks the day of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and is also the peak of the monthly activities at Jerusalem No. 2. The nine months continuous attendance of Mass and reception of the Eucharist on the first Friday as a necessary condition for reception into the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is also significant in this direction.

Rite of Dedication, Pacification for Abortion and the place of Dreams

The directive for the dedication rite was given when the Holy Water and the Water in the sacrificial cow symbols were revealed. One of the three white regular visitors, acting as the spokesperson for the group gave the instruction that anyone who came to Wɔfa for prayers had to be dedicated to the most Holy Trinity. An important aspect of the instruction was that anyone undertaking the rite was to include both parents (dead or alive), and spouse if married. The significance of including these people is that certain families are bound to deities, gods or other spirits (*abosom*), stool gods (*nkonwa abosom*) where there are chiefs, and particular gods for specific favours (*gyinaæ*) to which all family members are believed to be linked to. Any kind of negative influence that these family deities may have on the one undertaking the dedication is taken care of by the rite. All ancestral curses are also believed to be broken. The main idea behind the exercise is that, once dedicated, one becomes fully anchored to Christ. God's protection is assured and no other dominion can take control of the life of a dedicated person. However, divine protection cannot be guaranteed when after the dedication, one lives a life contrary to the gospel values. A striving for holiness or virtuous living is necessary.

Baptism, Holy Communion, Holy Matrimony for all married couples and related sacraments are critical for full realisation of the fruits of dedication. A voluntary fee is given for the dedication and where one cannot afford, the exercise can still be performed. The fee given signifies one's identification and personal commitment to the dedication. Once dedicated, the Catholic age-old tradition of meatless Fridays is recommended.

It was again emphasised that anyone who does the dedication confesses the number of abortions one has had or has assisted others to perform. One of the white men, speaking on authority like Jesus explained that the sin of abortion is unforgiveable because it is the deliberate termination of life, but if it is told the Blessed Virgin Mary and she pleads on one's behalf, it will be forgiven. Pacification fee is also required in the case of abortion.

After dedication, people are encouraged to take notice of the dreams they may have and are cautioned not reveal them to anybody, but to return to the Grotto to have them to be prayed over and dedicated to God through the hands of the Virgin Mary. No matter the nature of the dream and the people that may be involved, there should be no blame game and people who are even seen as agents of good tidings should not be thought of as special in the sight of God. This is because such people may not necessarily be the real people who may be directly involved in the different situations.

Below are the various dedication prayers.

1. NTUYHE MPAEE/DEDICATION PRAYER

Akan:

OTUMFOO BAASAFUA KRONKRON NYANKOPON,
 HWE WO BA A WO DO NO AKOMA,
 ENNE NKANFOO NE MPATADEE A
 W'AGYINA NNEBONEYEFOO NYINAA ANAN MU DE AMA
 WO YI, FA WON A WOSU FRE WO NYINAA BONE KYE
 WON, ENAM WO DO BA AKOMA KRONKRON NO DIN
 MU, ONO A ONE WO TE ASE DI HENE MMERE A ENI
 AWIEE.
 ENYE HO.

NTUHYE MPAEE/ DEDICATION PRAYER

English

Almighty Holy God of Trinity

Consider the heart of thy beloved Son

His adoration and atonement

Who on behalf of all sinners has presented unto thee

Forgive the sins of all those who cry unto thee

In the name of thy beloved Son's holy heart

He that lives and reigns with thee forever and ever Amen

2. BONE FAKYE/MPATA/ADESREDEE/ASEDA MPAEE PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS/ATONEMENT/ PETITION/THANKSGIVING

Akan:

O AKOMA KRONKRON, WO A

WO GYINA YEN NE AGYA NO NTEM

NA W'AYI WO ABEREWA KRONKRON

DBAABUN MARY SE ONYE YEN NSO

YEN ABEREWA NA ONYINA YEN NE WO NTEM,

FA WO MMDBOROHUNU HWE MA OBIARA

A DDE N'ABISADEE BEBA ABETO W'ANIM NO,

MA NE NSA NKA NE NYINAA EMFIRI DBAABUN KORO

NO ARA HO

NA ONNI DE.

ENYE HO.

JESUS A WODWOƆ NA WOBRE WO HO ASE AKOMA MU
 MA YEN AKOMA ENYE SE WO DEE YI
 MARY KRONKRON WO A ADOM NYINAA NAM WO SOƆ
 BO MPAEE MA YEN (3)
 OSORO HONHOM ENE SORO AHOTEEFOƆ NYINAA
 MOMMO MPAEE MMA YEN (ME, WON, NO)

BONE FAKYE/MPATA/ADESREDEE/ASEDA MPAEE
 PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS/ATONEMENT/PETITION/
 THANKSGIVING

English:

O Holy Heart

You who mediate between us and the Father
 And have chosen your Holy Mother Virgin Mary
 To be our Mother, and a Mediatrix between us and you
 In your mercy heed and answer
 All those who petition you through
 The same Virgin Mary, and rejoice. Amen
 Jesus, meek and humble of heart
 make our hearts like unto yours
 Holy Mary Mediatrix of all graces
 Pray for us (3)
 All you heavenly Spirits and all Saints
 Pray for us/me/him/her/them

The Name Wɔfa

Wɔfa is not actually a name but the Akan word for uncle (a brother to one's mother). The Akan are uniquely matrilineal and therefore descent is traced through the mother's line. The right of inheritance is also through the same matrilineal pattern. For this reason, what fathers are in a patrilineage to their children, is what uncles are in a matrilineage to nephews and nieces. In this capacity, uncles are expected to see to the welfare of their sisters' children. In the past, the eldest uncle (*wɔfa panin*) in the family was an advisor to all members of the household. It was his responsibility to see to the physical and spiritual well-being of all members of the household.

For all nephews and nieces therefore, the uncle is a "father figure" in all respects besides the biological. Therefore, by adopting it, Wɔfa had come to play a fatherly role, ministering to everyone as well as relating to all on equal terms.

Since nephews and nieces could inherit their uncles, all pilgrims or devotees become heirs to Wɔfa. By this relationship, all who come to the Grotto have the right to inherit their spiritual and true uncle Wɔfa George. They also become the beneficiaries of all the graces and blessings from the New City of God, Jerusalem No. 2. They are supposed to listen to all pieces of advice, hear the words of faith and encouragement Wɔfa emphasized and insisted on, keep them, and submit faithfully to all rules and regulations of the Grotto. He felt it was a most suitable name that brought him closer to everyone. He insisted on only that in addressing him until people got acquainted with it and called him and related to him as such. Being an uncle to all means that together with him, we form a Christian family.

Virgin Mary the Mediatrix

The Virgin Mary as the Mother of God, very central but not ultimate in Catholic belief is also given prominence here. The first Saturday of every month is dedicated to the honour of the Virgin Mary. It is therefore not surprising that She appeared in a group photo which

was taken at the Grotto on one of such Saturdays (4th April) in 1998. Among the group in the photo were Wōfa, Reverend Father Andrews Addai and some of the assistants at the Grotto. The apparition cleared some of the doubts that the people had about the Divine origin of Wōfa's mission. Some of the people were of the view that what Wōfa was doing was similar to their *abosomsom* (traditional worship of deities) because of the symbolism of trees and stones. According to Wōfa, the appearance of the heavenly Mother in the picture confirms the Divine backing to His mission. It is therefore the Spirit of God our Father in heaven at work and not the Spirit of any other deity at Jerusalem No. 2.



Wōfa had always emphasised on the presence of the Holy Trinity as well as the Virgin Mary at the Grotto. He made reference to this at the Chief's Palace when the exile was pronounced on him. When this photo was taken in 1998, this apparition of Our Lady was seen among the group, and thus confirms this belief. The Virgin Mary appears in a prayerful posture and depicts and emphasises the role of the Virgin Mary as One who prays and intercedes for us. She is NOT an object of worship as many non-Catholics are made to believe. If it were so, who then is She seen here to be praying to? It clearly indicates that she is also accountable to a higher authority and not the ultimate authority. She virtually "begs" on our behalf for God to grant us His Grace, and also teaches us to pray always for ourselves, our families and the world at large.

When Marciana started writing this book she believed her academic expertise was enough to see her through, but when at a certain point she realised the need for spiritual direction and guidance, it was the photo in which the apparition appeared that drew her attention to Father Andy. She concluded that perhaps the Mother of God was directing her to see Father. She suspended writing and mounted a search for him. Two months following her encounter with the photo, they met face to face at the Grotto for the first time and the work bounced back to life. Father had started the writing of the history with another person but which had been stalled when this person travelled abroad.

The intercessory role of the Virgin Mary comes to prominence here and pilgrims are exhorted to implore Her as the Mediatrix of all graces. After prayer of dedication by Akonta and Eno, and making the intentions for coming to the Grotto known to them, as well as the number of abortions made known (mostly for first time pilgrims), pilgrims are always asked to go to the Pieta and tell it all to the Blessed Mother. Also, it is before the Pieta that pilgrims individually seek the intercession of the Virgin Mary. As she totally immersed Herself in the passion of Her Son, she will not be refused whatever She asked for from Him. Many pilgrims attest to the efficacy of Her intercessory role. Scores of testimonies trickle in all the time, of favours attributed to her intercession.



This is a replica of Michelangelo's Pieta where pilgrims implore the intercession of the Virgin Mary.

Apart from congregational prayers, Silent or Meditative prayer is the norm for individual pilgrims in private prayer. Groups or individuals who visit the Grotto and wish to go into vocal/loud prayers on top of their voices are cautioned. Wofa often made special reference to the manner in which we approach chiefs and elders in our society. Certain postures, gestures and tones are not tolerated and would amount to gross disrespect if displayed before our chiefs and elders. How then can we do the same before God? Silent prayer is therefore emphasised and encouraged. Officially, requests for prayers are made after dedication. When various intentions are put before the leadership of the Grotto by pilgrims, they are usually directed to go to the Pieta to make their intentions known in SILENCE.

Chapter Five

SANCTIFYING MATERIALS

For many pilgrims, prayers are not just enough when visiting a holy place. It therefore remains a normal practice for many pilgrims to carry home with them some items or objects. These are considered to be holy and exert some sanctifying effect on those using them. Such items may include but not limited to water, plants/shrubs and soil. The same practice is observed at Jerusalem No. 2, but uniquely, some items were specifically revealed to Wōfa for the same purpose. These are the Holy Water, the Holy Flower and the soil. These are collected at will; pilgrims are not obliged to take them if they do not wish to do so.

Holy Water

When the Holy Water and its location were revealed to Wōfa, he was made to understand that it was truly symbolic of the blood and water from the side of Our Lord.¹⁸ Therefore he started giving it to people as a source of divine blessings and a healing therapy, and it has never been known to fail. Yet, some people who wanted to discredit the source of the water and its potency made one of such attempts through Reverend Father Lansink Ode SMA. Father Lansink Ode SMA called on Wōfa one time to caution him to be very careful with a certain group of people (the people's identity was disclosed to Wōfa) who had gone to him to complain about the impurity and ineffectiveness of the Holy Water as a healing therapy. He pointed out to Wōfa that in order for him to ascertain the truth of what he had been told, he carried a sample of the Holy Water for testing, and found it to be pure and could not have been harmful to anyone.

¹⁸This alludes to the portrait of Christ in the Divine Revelations to Blessed Faustina in the 1930s.

A direct connection can be observed between this particular Holy Water and the Water shown in the Divine Mercy Portrait of Christ. In the portrait as described by Blessed Faustina Kowalska and drawn/painted by Eugene Kazimierowski, our Lord is clearly depicted as One with blood and water gushing forth from his side. Similarly, the revelation to Włafa emphatically pointed to the Water and Blood from the side of Christ mentioned in the *Anima Christi*. This is therefore the basis for the distinctiveness of the Holy Water from Jerusalem No. 2.

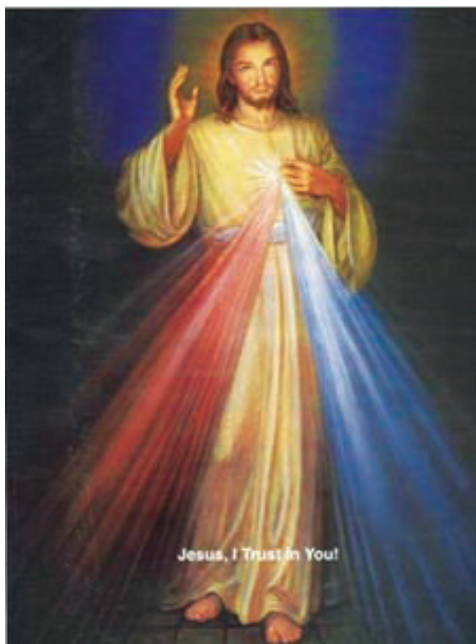
Both revelations do point to the fact that in spite of our sins, God through Christ has not deserted His people on earth. They clearly demonstrate that the mercy of God (Divine Mercy) is open to embrace all in spite of our sins. God is indeed in constant touch with his people and that through these revealed symbols He continues His saving works in our turbulent world to demonstrate His abiding love and mercy.

Rain is the main source of the Holy Water. It collects naturally in a crevice and cures various ailments especially those of spiritual nature. It comes along with a lot of blessings and wards off evil. Application is through drinking, not so much as one would drink to quench thirst, but even a drop on the tongue is enough. It is also used in signing or rubbing oneself as well as sprinkling on people, objects or places. With increase in the number of pilgrims over the years, the amount of water supplied to pilgrims keeps reducing but there is always a reminder that the amount of water is not so much important as the measure of one's faith. The water even dries up completely during the dry season. Neither the Holy Water nor any of the natural objects collected are sold. Pilgrims are warned against boiling the Holy Water. Some Ivorians who had engaged themselves in the sale of it only briefly, received warning signs in the form of peals of thunder in their homes. The water also turned into blood as has been mentioned earlier. Fear of what they experienced led them to rush to the Grotto with the remainder of the water.

Carefully selected assistants are assigned to the task of collecting the water and ensuring its proper distribution. Among other requirements, they must be communicants.



This is the site of the Holy Water. It is fenced to preserve its natural setting. Rain is the main source of water and remains dry when there are no rains. Other types of water for specific purposes are located close to it. We believe per the revelation to Wōfa, this Holy Water can be identified with what the Divine Mercy symbol stands for.



From our Lord as told by Blessed Faustina “The two rays denote Blood and Water. The pale ray stands for the Water which makes souls righteous. The red ray stands for the Blood which is the life of souls... These two rays issued forth from the very depths of My tender mercy when My agonised Heart was opened by a lance on the Cross.” Stressing the importance of the image, Jesus through Blessed Faustina revealed, “I am offering people a vessel with which they are to keep coming for graces to the fountain of mercy. That vessel is this image with the signature: “Jesus, I trust in You.”

Apart from this particular Holy Water, there are others that collect at various spots but within the same location. These are used for specific purposes and usually applied on the spot right from the very source. Usually they are not for drinking but for bathing or signing, rubbing, and smearing on parts of the body.

We have the water in the cow-shaped crevice into which people may immerse themselves or sign part(s) of their body with it for healing, cleansing, and purification. After praying the Stations of the Cross on the first Friday of the month, pilgrims sign themselves with it after praying the Lamb of God Prayer before going to collect the Holy Water, or before being blessed with the Holy Water. The symbolism is the spiritual purification and cleansing. One is thus made holy before encountering the Lord in the Holy Water.

There is also the *awoo nsuo* (water for those in need of children). After dedication, a little of the water, about a handful is collected by the one in need of a child and rubbed on the abdomen.

In addition to these is another type of water specifically for children. They are applied for their blessings, purification, healing and protection from evil. The children are immersed in it. When there are no rains and water is lacking, the children are simply signed with its dry contents.

Holy Flower

A special kind of Flower at the Grotto is of great spiritual value and devotees are encouraged to pick some along to use in their homes for both spiritual and aesthetic benefits. They are not recommended for people staying in rented or compound houses as some landlords and co-tenants may not tolerate the use of them. The flower is the only natural product that one cannot give or transfer to another person. It must be picked directly by the one who needs it or wants to use it.

The reason for this condition governing its use is that as a live plant, it has a direct connection with the natural environment. In other words,

its effect is not limited to the individual but others as well. Therefore, to plant it in a specific environment (house or any other physical structure) is to share its spiritual benefit with co-inhabitants, who may not wish to share in its use.

Like the other sanctifying materials, its spiritual benefit is attested to by many people. After so many years of marriage without a child, a woman came to the Grotto to pray for one. As her husband was quite well to do, she was worried about her childless situation, but when she returned home with some of the Flower, the husband never allowed her to enter the house with it. She was divorced but in her second marriage, she bore children and visited the Grotto for thanksgiving. The husband in this case was not comfortable with the flower.

Similarly, the proprietor of a private school gave a testimony of his experience with the Flower. He became worried that pupils at a certain point in time were deserting his school for no apparent reason. He heard about the Grotto and came to dedicate himself and the school to the Holy Trinity. He picked some of the flowers which he planted in two separate flower pots and placed at the main entrance of the school compound. He then observed what was to follow. In a few days' time, three pupils left the school. He got another surprise when a certain pastor who used to assist him in prayers visited the school. Instead of entering the compound to pray as usual, he stood by the entrance and began to pray. He would not enter the compound. He complained to the proprietor that the presence of some two people in the compound was responsible for the desertions, and at the same time preventing others from enrolling in the school. The proprietor believed something had really happened but the pastor had given the wrong interpretation of it. This was confirmed when he subsequently ceased coming to the school. Thereafter there was a phenomenal increase in enrolment in the school.

Another acquaintance of the proprietor who was a Muslim also visited the school while he was not around. His ward who welcomed the friend on behalf of the father later relayed to him that the visitor

stopped at the entrance. While standing there, he pointed to the Holy Flowers saying they were not ordinary flowers, and that they were in a certain way different from the other flowers in the compound. After pausing for a while and looking at the flowers, he gave a sigh and repeated with emphasis that they are not ordinary, common flowers. Without any further explanation, he left the school premises.

These experiences made the man to believe in the sanctifying and protective effect of the Holy Flower.



This is the Holy Flower. It can be planted for both aesthetic and spiritual purposes. It is not transferrable to another person and must be picked directly by the one who wishes to use it.

Holy Soil

The unique soil on the stretch of land around the Holy Water at the Grotto is also believed to have healing properties. It is known to have cured various skin diseases and other ailments.

Marciana's personal experience with the soil had to do with a friend who had come to stay temporarily with her. Her right leg started to

swell and for about four days there wasn't any sign of improvement after the application of various ointments. Realising that some of the soil was at hand, it was quickly mixed with a little of the Holy Water and applied on the fourth night. At about 5.30 am the next morning, the household was awoken with shouts of relief from this friend. She was actually jumping and explained that as she was still sleeping, she felt that the pain that was causing her sleepless nights seemed to have ceased, and there was this urge in her to stretch out her hand to touch the swollen portion. As she did so, she was amazed to realise that her leg was almost back to normal and the pain was actually gone. When she became completely healed, she personally visited the Grotto for dedication.

Some Effects of the use of the Sanctifying Materials

The Holy Water, Flower and Soil are sanctifying materials and once appropriately applied can nullify the efficacy of all forces which are evil in nature. They come with copious blessings for those who apply them with faith- children for childless couples; mend relationships, conversion of people among others. These materials can be applied to our human endeavours that need Divine blessings to be improved, enhanced and fulfilled.

The following are a few testimonies associated with the use of these materials: A woman who developed a mental problem was brought to the Grotto where she continuously participated in performing the Stations of the Cross. On three different occasions, she dreamt that she performed the prayer alone. On each morning following the dream she drank the Holy Water and went ahead to do the prayer as she saw herself do it in the dream. She concluded each prayer by dipping herself in water contained in the cow-shaped crevice, and on each of the three occasions she vomited a worm and informed Wōfa about it. After vomiting the third worm on the third day Wōfa told her that the worms were the cause of her ailment. She received total healing.

In another instance, another woman after dedicating herself carried a big gallon of the Holy Water home. This was in the early years when the Water was in plentiful supply because pilgrims were few. She returned later to explain that she had by her own intuition used the water to spray on her portion of a cocoa farm which she and her sister inherited from their father. Her sister's portion of the farm often produced good yields while her own was afflicted with a cocoa disease which caused the pods to drop prematurely from the trees. She said spraying the cocoa with the Holy Water eliminated the disease and the cocoa started producing plentiful and abundant yields.

Relevant Plants/Shrubs - God revealed through Nature.

It can also be observed that some plants and shrubs in the environment are of great religious significance. The names of some of these plants emphasise some Christian/gospel values, the nature of God/Christ and His relationship with the Mother of God (the Virgin Mary), as well as our relationship with them. Some of the plants were on the land before the revelations to Wofa and subsequent clearing of the path. Others appeared at particular times in the history and development of the Grotto. Some die off and are replaced by different ones, while others also have a permanent character (perennials). Their essence is that they speak to particular issues and have significant messages. Explained below are some of these plants:

1. **Doba- Dɔ** (beloved) and **ba** (child) put together is **Doba** (beloved child)
 (Akan) *Nyame no ara aka ɛ woyɛ me dɔba a wosɔ m'ani. Agyinaɛ no bebreɛ ne baabi ahodoɔ a Yesu, Nyame Doba no nɛnkyerɛnɛ ɛwɔ no, Doba dua no bi si hɔ.*

English - **Doba** translated means “beloved child”. God himself has said “You are my beloved son with whom I am well pleased.” Jesus Christ is the true beloved son/child of God. At many of the Stations of the Cross and some other places where a symbol of Jesus is manifest, the **Doba** plant is there in its natural/original form.

When Wɔfa started to clear the Way under Divine instruction, he found that the Dɔba plants which were uncovered were already positioned at their respective places. God knowing very well that this is the Akan name for the plant allowed them to grow there on purpose to support the fulfilment of His mission. This is so because having designed the special mission to be accomplished in Ghana and in an Akan-speaking area, God selected this special tree with this particular Akan name to represent His beloved son Jesus Christ. This makes it a real, true, unique and symbolic representation of our Lord Jesus Christ. God indeed understands all languages and communicates to each and all people in their own language.

The *Dɔba* plants are well represented at the various Stations of the Cross.

2. ***Abobɔmma*** (Akan) (i) *Nyame na ɔbɔ mma enti obiara yɛ Nyame ba.*
 (ii) *Me na m'abɔ wɔɔ, ɛna mawo wɔɔ, wo yɛ me ba.*
 (ii) *Ɛno nti Nyame rebisa obiara ɛ: wo yɛ me ba?*

(English)

- (i) God creates children so all are children of God.
 (ii) I have created you and have begotten you, you are my child.
 (iii) God poses this question to everybody: are you my child?

Abobɔmma implies that once all human beings are created by God we all ultimately become His children. Therefore, God does not discriminate; we only have to strive to follow His ways to gain full entitlement to His grace and mercy. On another level, *Abobɔmma* implies that Jerusalem No. 2 is home for everyone by virtue of the fact that all human beings are His children. Anyone with faith who steps foot on this Holy Land will not go back disappointed. It is for the benefit of all God's children- Christians, Muslims, Hindus, black, white, male, female, poor, rich etc. God welcomes us with open arms and we should approach Him with confidence. So God is asking everybody; 'are you my child?' Do our life styles reflect that we are

truly God's children? We should appreciate that we have been created by God, we are His children and acknowledge that He is our loving father.

3. **Abisaa** -(Akan) *Merebisa wo ɛ wogyɛ di? Saa nnɛma a ɛwɔ ɛha yi a yɛde rekyɛ wo yi (nɛnkyɛnɛ yi), wogyɛ di ɛ ɛfiri Awurade?*

(English) I am asking you: Do you believe? It is a question: Do you believe that all the symbols and their meanings on this holy land are my handiwork? Do you believe that all the things here are from God?

4. **Ama or Amma**-(Akan) *Onyankopɔn de ne ho ama yɛn. Wɔ nso fa woho ma no na wo ho ntɔ wo. Fa woho ma no na ɔmfɔ wo nyɛ n'adwuma.*
Aɔɛn nti na wo mfɔ wo ho mma no?

(English) God has given Himself to us and if we also give ourselves to Him, we will have peace. We should always be ready to give ourselves for him to be used for his work.

Why do you not give yourself to him?

5. **Aprenpresa** - (this is close to the mercy/confessional seat)
(Akan) *Wokɔ bɔneka a, ka no penpen, woka a, Awurade de kyɛ wo. Woka a na asa.*

(English) If you go to confession, mention your sins as they are. After confession that is all. Be honest and truthful in your confession. Once you say it as it is, God forgives and one is made whole again.

6. **Aɛmkorɔtia** - (Akan) *Aɛm kro pɛ, ɛyɛ tiatiatia, nso nipa nte aɛɛ. Gye Onyankopɔn di na yɛmmɔ wo asu, na wo ayɛ Nyame ba. Gye Awurade honam di, na nom ne mogya, na nya daa nkwa.*

(English) God's message/call is simple and brief but people do not understand - believe in God and be baptised and become a child of God, eat my body, drink my blood and have eternal life.

7. **Aseseaa-** (Akan) *Ɛsɛsɛ wosese wo bɔne, kaekae wo bɔne ansa na woaka; Afei sese sɛdɛ wobɛtumi abɔ bra a ɛsɔ Onyame ani. Ɛbɛduru baabi, Onyame bɛsese obiara abrabɔ mu nɛm, ɔbɛbu no atɛn.*

(English) Literally translated it means to calculate, but it means to recall and to remember one's sins as they are; recall and remember your sins before you confess; One will have to measure out how you are going to serve God and please Him. At the end of time, God will calculate/measure/give judgement to each and every one according to how one lived his/her life.

8. **Besemankoma** - (Akan) *Nyame yɛ Domankoma.*

Wobɛsom me a som me nko ara.

(English) God is the Great one, the one and only God and the all in all. If you worship me, worship me alone. This is a call to serve only God and emphasizes the need to obey the First Commandment. It is also a call to devotees of Jerusalem No. 2 not to go back to other lesser gods/deities. Here is an encounter with the living and Triune God. Be honest and truthful to your God.

9. **Abɛ(ɛberɛ)-** (Akan) *Ahobrasɛ. Biribiara a ɛfiri Kristo awɔɔ so ɛde kɔsi ne wuo mu kyɛɛ n'ahobrasɛ. "Jesus a wodwɔɔ na wo brɛ wo ho ase wɔ akoma mu ma yɛn akoma nyɛ sɛ wo dɛ yi." Afei nso ɛkyɛɛ Eno Mary ahobrasɛ.*

(English) Palm tree - it is symbolic of humility: From birth to death, Christ remained an epitome of humility. 'Jesus meek and humble of heart make our hearts like unto yours'. It is also applicable to the Virgin Mary since she also symbolises humility.

10. **Kookuonisuo-** (Akan) *(Nisuo). Su wo bɔne ho. Sɛ wo bɔne nti, wosu gu Nyame so, na wodi wo bɔne ho awɛɛhoɔ, na wokyi nisuo kyɛɛ sɛ worenɛ bɔne no bio a Nyame de bɛkyɛ wo.*

(English) (Tears) – Be sorrowful and weep for your sins. When you truly confess all your sins in tears, with repentant and contrite heart, with the resolve not to sin again, God will forgive you. Shedding tears is a human phenomenon. There are certain critical/painful/emotional moments when one cannot help but shed tears.

11. **Kronkromma**-(Akan) *Yɛ kronkron. Sɛ wo bɛɔ Nyame ani a, te wo ho firi bɔne biara ho, na bɛyɛ kronkron ba, na Nyame mfa wo mmata ne ho. Bɔneka a ɛfiri akoma mu ma nipa yɛ kronkron ba.*

(English) Be Holy. It is a call to be holy. To please God, we have to turn away from every sin and be holy. This plant emphasises on the need for all practising Christians to strive to be holy in order to ensure our closeness/union with God who is holy. Sacramental confession from the heart makes one a holy child.

12. **Nkanaa**-(Akan) *Kae daa. Kae dɛ Yesu ayɛ ɛwɔ agyinaɛ biara. Kae sɛ me ne Awurade Nyakopɔn. Kae wo Nyame daa. Kae sɛ wo ho yɛ den sɛn ara wobɛwu. Kae sɛ bɔne akatua ne owuo. Ahohia mu no Awurade ne wo gyefɔɔ.*

(English) Remember always. It is a call to remember always what the Lord has done and is communicating to us at every Station of the Way of the Cross. A call to remember Jesus' words. Remember that I am the Lord your God, remember your God always, remember that death awaits you, remember that the wages of sin is death, remember that in all your trials the Lord is your deliverer.

In effect, remember all the good things that will strengthen your faith, deepen your union with the Lord and help you to submit to the gospel values.

13. **Pɛpɛwaa** - (Akan) *Firi wo ara wopɛmu na kɔ bɔneka. Ɛnye nhyɛ. Enti ka nokorɛ. Nyame mpɛ sɛ yɛbɛyɛ dɛɛ yɛpɛ. Nyame adwuma biara nso a wotu woho sɛ wobɛyɛ no firi wo pɛ mu yɛ na ɛnsɔ n'ani. Biribi ara a woreyɛ no, firi wo ara wo pɛ mu na yɛ. Firi wo pɛ mu na kɔ bɔne ka , firi wo pɛ mu na ka wo bɔne, firi wo pɛ mu na yɛ papa, firi wo pɛ mu na bɔ mpaɛɛ. Afei nso ɛwɔ sɛ yɛyɛ biribiara pɛpɛpɛ sɛdɛ Nyame aɛm ɛne Asɔre kronkron ɛkyerɛ yɛn no.*

(English) Free will and accuracy/precision in our response to doing God's will. There should be no compulsion in confession/penance. If you go, be sincere. God doesn't want us to do things according to our own will but His. Whatever you commit yourself to do for God and in your social life, do it out of your free will to please God and for His greater glory- confession, doing good, working, studying, recreating, praying etc. In addition, whatever we do, it should be done precisely as the word of God and Mother Church teaches us to do.

14. **Nyanyanforowa** - (Akan) *Ɛyɛ dua a ɛyɛ den, na ɛyɛ den sɛ wobɛtumi atu aɛɛ. Wɔ ho yɛ den sɛn ara wobɛwu. Wɔ wu nso a biribi wɔ akyire. Wɔ bɛbu w' abrabɔ a wo abɔ ho nkonta. Wɔ bɛbu wo nnwumma ho atɛn.*

English: The plant is hard and very difficult to uproot. No matter how strong one is, death is the ultimate end of man on earth. You will account for your works and deeds and will be judged accordingly. It is found at only the 14th Station of the Cross.

15. **Kuntunkuni**-(Akan) *Sɛ ayie ba a na yɛfira kuntunkuni. Egyina Akoma kronkron noho. (between 12th and 13th Stations). Wɔyɛi Yesu firii mmeamudua no so no, ɛhɔ na wɔde no bɛtoo yɛ. Ɛhɔ na wɔpɛpaa ne ho ansaa na wɔde no rekɔto ne maame nnan so. Ɛyɛ mmerɛ a na Mary ne asuafoɔ a na aka no wɔ awerɛhɔɔ bunu mu.*

English: *Kuntunkuni* is a mourning cloth. It is found between the 12th and 13th Stations. From the Cross, that was where Christ was put to be cleansed and prepared to be received by His mother. It is a period of intense mourning and deep sorrow for Mary and the disciples.

16. **Kankano-** (Akan) *Ɛyɛ dua a ɛyɛ nwono paa ara. Yɛde sa yarɛ. Sɛ yɛdi Yesu akyi a ɛɛ sɛ yɛn nso yɛ fa nwononwono mu. Nanso ayaresa, nkunimdie, nhyira, animuonyam ɛne daa nkwa ɛdi akyire.*

English: It is a very bitter tree/shrub. Christians must understand that in the Christian journey, there are sufferings, pains and bitterness to be endured. But healing, victory, blessings, glory and eternal life become the ultimate reward.

17. **Abonwono-** (Akan) -*Ɛyɛdua a sɛ wowe a ɛdi kan ɛyɛ nwono ansa na akyire yi wo ate ne dɛ. Kristo ni biara di kan di nwononwono ansa na w'adi dɛ.*

English: It is a plant that tastes bitter at first but becomes sweet later. Christians go through hardship, pain suffering and death before victory, relief, joy and fulfilment come. Therefore, no matter how one suffers as a believer, God promises joy at the end.

The explanation given to the trees, shrubs and other symbols are not exhaustive. Other people inspired by the Holy Spirit can interpret/give deeper meanings/insights into what we already have as the word of God does. These symbols may die off and new ones can emerge. The Spirit Himself will communicate the message intended for God's people through His own instruments.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The Stations of the Cross at Jerusalem No. 2 are not at variance with what pertains to the Universal Roman Catholic Church. The Stations start from the point where the Trinitarian symbols are located, and extend through to the 14th Station. This is in strict adherence to the instruction given to clear in a straight path in a given direction at the start of the revelations to Wɔfa. At those Stations where we have the symbols (trees, shrubs, stones), they are presented in a way that speak for themselves. The Station is clearly depicted in the symbols. It is only at some few places where these symbols are not found. Some of the early ones have withered with time and cannot be found but their message and meaning are still relevant. They are of eternal value, God speaking to us through these symbols. Below are the Stations and the symbols associated with them.

1. FIRST STATION: Jesus is Condemned to Death

This is where we have the Trinitarian symbols: first, the most Holy Trinity, standing on its own represented by three stones: and a second Trinitarian symbol depicting Wɔfa George before the three chiefs of Nkoranza and their elders. It is also symbolic of our Lord Jesus Christ before the three personalities who had a hand in his condemnation (**Caiaphas, Annas, and Pilate**). Here Wɔfa was condemned just as Jesus was condemned by Pilate and others. At the second Trinitarian symbol, one stone stands on its own in front of another set of three stones. Wɔfa explained that it was the Lord Jesus Christ coming out of the Trinity to offer Himself for our salvation. He said it also signifies Wɔfa George being exiled by the three chiefs and the spiritual sacrifice of a cow in the name of Wɔfa by the chiefs. This is a version of Wɔfa being offered for the spiritual good of God's people. Traditionally, male subjects to chiefs are their sons. So in this case, Wɔfa is a true son to the chiefs and the chiefs a Father to him (In effect, it is an offering of one who belongs to them – a son by his fathers).

Demonstration at the Chief's Palace

After settling at Jerusalem No. 2 for some time, Wɔfa expressed his intention to visit the chiefs at the *Nkorakzamanhene's* palace with his assistants. He had already informed the chiefs who agreed to receive him on a particular Friday. Wɔfa asked Akonta to buy a rope. When they reached the palace on that day the chiefs asked of Wɔfa's mission. The chiefs who were present on this occasion were the *Nkoranzamanhene*, the late Okatakyie Agyeman Kodom IV, *Sessemahene/Nifahene*, late Nana Kofi Baffoe and *Kissimanhene /Adontehene*, Nana Okofo Agyapong. These were the three chiefs whose predecessors tried Wɔfa, found him guilty and imposed the exile on him. Also present were the Queenmother of Nkoranza and the wife of the *Nkoranzamanhene*. He said he had come to demonstrate something before them and for which reason he had come along with his assistants.

Wɔfa then asked Francis Asiedu (Akonta) to tie his two hands together in front with a rope before the chiefs. Akonta did as he was told. Wɔfa then told the chiefs that this was what they did to Christ at the palace of Pilate and there was pronounced guilty and convicted to die. And it is this very Christ whom He Wɔfa is representing. As Christ sacrificed Himself for His people and the whole world, so also representing Christ and in His name, he had been sacrificed for his people and the whole world.

He had come to the palace to demonstrate to them the mission for which he was exiled to Jerusalem No. 2. The presence of the *Omanhene's* wife reminds us of the intervention of Pilate's wife during the trial of Jesus. This also testifies to the spirit of reconciliation, collaboration, collaboration and understanding that had evolved in the relations between Wɔfa and the traditional authorities. This was in 1997.

Following is a picture which he took with the chiefs after the demonstration.



Wofa before the successors of the three eminent chiefs (*Nkoranzamanhene* -middle behind Wofa, *Sessemahene/Nifahene* first from left and *Kissimahene/Adontehene*, second from right) who were involved in his trial and exile, some elders, the Queenmother of Nkoranza (second from left) and the wife of the *Nkoranzamanhene* (extreme right).

Symbols:

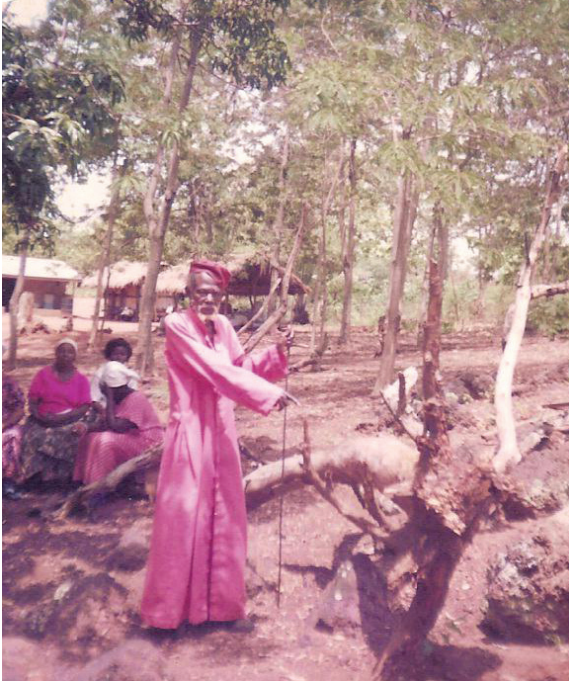
Nkanaa -*Kae daa æs Jesus de ne ho bɔɔ afɔdeɛ maa wo.*

(Remember always that Jesus offered Himself for you).

Besemankoma - *Nyame yɛ Domankoma.* (God is eternal, great, infinite).-

Wobɛsom me a, som me nko ara. (If you choose to worship me, worship me alone).

There was a *Dɔba* here but it is now extinct.



Wəfa pointing to the *Dəba* which had died and had been uprooted on its own.



The First Station of the Cross

2. SECOND STATION: Jesus Carries His Cross.

There was a *Doba* which is now extinct. This is one place where there is no special symbol.

This is an indication that the Cross can be anything: can come from anywhere, can take any form for a Christian, can come from unlikely sources and yet, each Christian should not reject it when he/she will have to carry it. It should be embraced.



The Second Station of the Cross



The Third Station of the Cross

3. THIRD STATION: Jesus Falls for the First Time.

Symbols:

Doba /Abobomma-Woyɛ me ba dɛɛ? Wo yɛ me ba dɛɛ a fa wo mmeamudua na di m'akyi. (Are you my child/son/daughter? If you are my child take up your Cross and follow me.

Nkanaa -Kae baabi a wofiri hwee aseɛ. (Remember where you fell, pick up the pieces and move on).

4. FOURTH STATION: Jesus Meets His Mother.

Here the *Doba* plant is in a symbiotic association with the palm tree. The *Doba* tree is inextricably intertwined with the palm tree. Wofa did explain that it was/is representative of the relationship between Christ and the Virgin Mary. It explains the close affinity that exists between Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Mother. Mary nourished Jesus in Her womb – food, water and other relevant nutrients were supplied by the Virgin Mary. Therefore, one would not be far from wrong to conclude that the blood serving as a conduit for the supply of the relevant nutrients for the Lord in the womb of Mary was the blood from/of Mary.



The Fourth Station of the Cross

Symbols

1. *Doba* –(Beloved Child/Son). Representing our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. *Abɛ (Ebrɛ) Ahobrasɛ. Brɛ woho ase.* (The palm tree is a symbol of humility). Representing the humble handmaid, the Blessed Virgin Mary. We have to imitate the humility of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The union of the *Doba* and the *Abɛ* is a call to be in real intimate relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ. We have to allow His Body and blood we receive in the Eucharist to go through us and transform us into His likeness.

The leaves of the *Doba* were initially concentrated at the top of the palm tree (the canopy which bears the palm fruit). So the leaves of the *Doba* were prominent and could be seen as one looked up the palm tree. This is a fulfillment of a section of the Hail Holy Queen prayer, “...And after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus...” It is only in Jerusalem No. 2 where a palm tree symbolically representing the Blessed Virgin Mary is showing Jesus represented by the *Doba*. Anyone who undertakes the journey to Jerusalem No. 2 truly identifies himself/herself with the exile of Wəfa George. This person clearly sees Jesus the fruit of the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the *Doba* which is in association with the palm tree. And in reality, anyone who undertakes the journey to Jerusalem No. 2 in faith experiences the Lord Jesus in a way and manner unlike it is elsewhere.

3. *Abisaa* - *Wogyē di s̄ saa n̄s̄m yi a woret̄s̄ yi, ɛne d̄s̄ worehunu yi ɛȳ nokor̄s̄?* (Do you believe that all that you are hearing and all that you are seeing are true?).
4. *Abobomma* - *Wō b̄tumi atena ɛno Mary nan ase aȳ ne ba?* (Can you sit at the feet of Mary and become Her child?).
5. **FIFTH STATION: Simon of Cyrene Helps *Jesus* Carry His Cross.**



The Fifth Station of the Cross

Symbols:

1. *Doba* - *Nyame Doba*. (Beloved Child of God).
2. *Kankano* - *Fa nwonwono mu di Yesu akyi*. (Endure pain, suffering and bitterness as you follow Jesus).
3. *Abɛ (Brɛ)* - *Fa ahobrasɛ sɔ wo amanehunu mu*. (Embrace your suffering in humility).
4. *Onwono* - *Dɛɛdɛ wɔ nwononwono akyi*. (There is sweetness after bitterness).
5. *Pɛpɛwa* - *Pɛ (Pene) amanehunu biara a ɛbɛba woso Osoro ahenie no nti*. (Accept and embrace pain and suffering that will come your way willingly for the sake of the Kingdom).

6. SIXTH STATION: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

Here, there were two *Damma* facing each other. One is now dead and it is left with only one. A symbol of the image of Jesus left on Veronica's Towel. Anyone who braves through all odds to follow Him is blessed with the presence of the Lord. Jesus is reflected in such a person. Jesus accompanies such a person on life's journey wherever one goes/is.



The Sixth Station of the Cross

Symbols:

1. **Dɔba** – *Yesu yɛ Nyame Dɔba*. (Jesus is the Beloved Child/Son of God)
2. **Aseseaa** –i. *Sese ɛkwan a wobɛfa so adi Yesu akyi na wo asom Nyame yie*. (measure out clearly the way to follow Christ and worship God in a worthy manner).
 - ii. *Sese abrabɔ a worebɔ*. (Be mindful/ watchful/conscious of the life you are leading – you will account for it).
3. **Nkanaa** –*Kae daa ɛ Jesus na ɛ ɔba wo abrabɔ mu a ɔbɛtumi ahyɛ wo animuonyam*. (Remember that it is only Jesus who can honour and glorify you when he enters your life).

7. SEVENTH STATION: Jesus Falls the Second Time



The Seventh Station of the Cross

Symbols:

1. *Dɔba-Jesus yɛ Nyame Dɔba.* (Jesus is the Beloved Child of God).
2. *Krayie* – i. *Wɔ ne ewiase nni kra ɛmɛɛ a woredi Awurade akyi.* (bid farewell to the world as you follow the Lord).
- ii. *Nkasɛɛ wɔ krayie no ho, enti, hwɛ ɛ wo nyɛ nkasɛɛ nwowɔ wo nua.* (There are thorns on the shrub, so make sure you are not a thorn in the flesh of your brother/sister).
- iii. *Kra efie yie ɛ woreba Jerusalem a* (be emphatic that you are coming to Jerusalem as you bid farewell to the relevant people).

8. EIGHTH STATION: Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem

The *Dɔba* at this particular Station has red spots on it and assumes a more reddish colour during the period of lent. At other times they appear to be like live blood trickling on a body. It was the blood all over the body of Christ from the torture received from the soldiers that moved the women of Jerusalem to weep, and this *Dɔba* relates to this.

Here too another *Dɔba* sits on a stone symbolising Christ on a donkey on His triumphant entry into Jerusalem to begin His Passion. These two significant events in Jerusalem merge into this particular Station.



The Eighth Station of the Cross

With time, some of the features on the *domma* plants have changed, nonetheless, the basic features remain. Still at this Station is another plant that is lying on a branch of the *Doba*, symbolising Christ under the weight of the Cross.

Symbols:

1. *Doba* - *Awurade kɔ so ara dɔ yɛn mmerɛ a y'afom no.* (God loves us in spite of our sins)
2. *Aɛnkorɔtia*- *Aɛm koro pɛ a ɛyɛ tia ɛne ɛ wone Awurade bɛtena* (The call to be with the Lord is a simple message that everyone should understand- it is simply stated and easily understood).
3. *Amma* - i. *Awurade de ne ho ama wo, ɛno nti ɛwɔ ɛ wo nso wode woho ma no.* (The Lord has offered Himself for you and you should also give yourself to Him).
- ii. *Awurade bɛkɔ so adɔ wo ɛmerɛ a wo de woho ama no.* (The Lord will continue to love you once you give yourself to Him).
4. *Kronkromma* (Holy children) - *Hwɛ ɛ wobɛyɛ kronkron ba, na w'atumi abata wo Nyankopɔn.* (Try to be a holy child so that you can be closer to God).

9. NINTH STATION: Jesus Falls the Third Time.

In spite of the long period of suffering, Christ lifts Himself up after the third fall, strong, resolute and determined to embrace and die on the Cross for our salvation. This is a motivation for all beloved children of God to remain strong, steadfast and firm in all difficult situations.

Symbols:

1. *Doba* - *Doba no gyina hɔ pintin.* (The *Doba* plant remains strong and firm on the ground. Stand strong, firm and tall in the faith after every fall).



The Ninth Station of the Cross

2. *Abobomma* - *Sɔre na tena Awurade nan ase emeɛ a w'ahwe ase atɔ nsɔhwɛ mu, ɛfiri ɛ wo yɛ ne ba.* (Rise up after you have fallen into temptation and sit at the feet of the Lord for you are His child).

10. TENTH STATION: Jesus is stripped of His Garments.

The bark of the tree here seems to be torn, and opens up at some points, signifying that the stripping of His clothes tore some parts of the flesh of Christ. It is a reminder to shed off our immoral attitudes, unhealthy behaviours, and break up with improper relations though painful as they may be.

Symbols:

1. *Dɔba* - *Dɔba no abena ayɛ ɛ apaepae.* (The bark of the tree here seems to be torn, and opens up at some points).



The Tenth Station of the Cross

2. *Pɛpɛwa - ɛnyɛ dæ woara wo pɛ ɛmɛɛ a wo wɔ amanehunu mu.*
(Do not do your will when you have been into difficult times. The Lord wills/sees it, He assures us with His presence and strength, and we should endure).
3. *Toa Ntini -Ntini (Veins). Mogya a na ɛnam Jesus ntini mu.*
(Blood that was passing through the veins of Jesus). The intense pressure of the blood flowing through the veins caused some veins to tear at some points resulting in the flow of more blood at the parts of the body torn. With the stripping, the garments/cloth stuck to the wound further opened up the wounds to cause more pain and more flow of blood.

11. ELEVENTH STATION: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross.

Here a stone is spread out flat on the ground and this tree (*Nkanaa*) stands on it, almost evergreen throughout the year.



The Eleventh Station of the Cross

Symbols:

- i. *Ebo* (Stone): The Stone is a symbol of Jesus lying on the Cross and being nailed onto it.
- ii. *Nkanaa- Kae daa & wo nni Jesus a wo nni nkwa.* (Remember always that if you do not have Jesus you do not have life). Being anchored to Christ sustains life here on earth as well as ensures eternal life.

12. TWELFTH STATION: Jesus Dies on the Cross

Symbols:

1. *Doba*: Two *Domma* plants can be found here.

The original *Doba* died and a new one emerged from the old stock. With its growth and development, three distinct stems have sprung from the original stock. One is bent backward, another one is somehow straight and a third one twines around the more straight one.



The Twelfth Station of the Cross

The one bent backward, Wɔfa explained is God the Father who is supporting God the Son (the straight one) as He endures the pain and fulfills His salvation mission on the Cross. God the Son is inspired by the Holy Spirit and is in intimate union with Him, represented by the one twining around the Son which is the straight one. In effect all three persons of the Holy Trinity are involved as God the Son suffers and dies on the Cross. It is a confirmation that all members of the Trinity are involved when each of them is accomplishing/fulfilling His primary mission (a sound theology of the Trinity from a non-literate messenger of God).

The second *Dɔba* plant has its own telling story. At the initial settlement near the First Station of the Cross, it happened that one evening during a conversation Wɔfa told Anthony Adjei that the two of them were going to pass the night near an uncompleted building he was then putting up around the Twelfth Station of the Cross, then popularly called the Cross. The building was roofed but not ready for habitation. At about 7:00 clock pm on that day, they set off with a lantern, a mat and a pillow. They prepared one of the rooms and slept in it.

Anthony Adjei had a dream in the night. In the dream, he saw a light suspended in the air at about knee level and moving on its own without anyone holding it. Anthony Adjei observed that Wɔfa was following the light. The light moved and stopped intermittently while Wɔfa appeared to be searching for something. The movement of the light and Wɔfa continued until they got to the spot where Anthony Adjei stood in the dream. Wɔfa told him that he was searching for something and that he would tell him what it was once he found it. The movement and search continued with Wɔfa following the light in the dream.

Anthony woke up from the dream to here a bell ringing for morning service. He told Wɔfa of his intention to attend the morning service to which he agreed. He then narrated his dream to Wɔfa and he told him to go ahead and attend the morning service and come back for him to show him what he was searching for in the dream.

He returned from the morning service to meet Wɔfa sitting on the verandah. He rose up and led him to the Twelfth Station of the Cross, and very close to it, pointed to a tiny plant that had just sprouted from the ground, and said this was what he was searching for in the dream. The new plant was close to the original *Dɔba* tree described above. Wɔfa explained that it was this *Dɔba* (Wɔfa knew at that time that it was *Dɔba*) which had come to confirm, affirm and testify to the original. It has come to fulfill what the original stood for.

The Spirit, according to Wɔfa, which took possession of and inspired an *oburoni* (a White - the Lord Jesus) to accomplish the saving mission of the world in Jerusalem in overseas, was the same Spirit that took possession of and inspired an *obibini* (a Black - Wɔfa) to accomplish a similar mission in Jerusalem No. 2.¹⁹ The two works are the works of the Most Holy Trinity - God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, doing their work in both.

¹⁹ In the Ghanaian/Akan setting, the term *oburoni* is a generic term used to refer to any light-skinned person outside of sub-Saharan Africa. No clear distinction is made between categories like European, Asian etc. It is used here to refer to Jesus Christ - the light skin of the Middle Eastern stock.

He said it was for this reason that the Spirit led them to sleep at this particular place that night.

The newly-sprouted *Doba* was fenced to protect it, and as it grew into a tree, it also divided up into three main branches just like the first one, confirming what Wofa had earlier explained.

Around this time Crucifixes with two faces having the body of Christ at the front and the back and unfamiliar to many people were seen on the market/stands for sale. Wofa explained that each of the “Trinitarian *Doba*” represents each face of the emerging crucifix. Both plants are captured in the picture below.



The two *Domma* plants. The older /first one (left) and the second one (right)

2. ***Ayeforo antoo*** -*Honhom biara ɛnn̄to Nyame honhom. Yesu wui nanso ɔtease.* (This plant is very hard and difficult to destroy). There is no power, nobody, no spirit, no matter how strong it may be, that can be compared to the spirit or the power or the might of God. **Jesus died but He is alive.**
3. ***Pɛpɛwa*** - *Yesu firi ne pɛ mu awu ama wo ɛwɔ mmeamudua no so, ɛno nti wo nso gyae wo pɛ mu ma Awurade.* (Jesus willingly died for you on the Cross, so you should also willingly submit your will to the Lord).

4. **Krayie** -i. *Kra yie ɛmerɛ a woreba Jerusalem* (be honest and truthful when you bid farewell to friends and close relations as you come to Jerusalem).
- ii. *Wo ne ewiase nni nkra yie na sɔ Awurade mu yie.* (Let your bidding farewell to the world and embracing the Lord be sincere, firm and resolute).
5. **Ɔbotan** - *Si wo dan wɔ ɔbotan so.* (Build your house on a rock-that is, build your life on the Rock of Ages - Jesus Christ, and do the will of God, listen to the word of God and act on it).

ƆNEKA AKONWA -Mercy/ Confessional Seat

This is a natural and perfect arrangement of stones, plants and trees to suit a confessional seat. It is located between the Twelfth and Thirteenth Stations. The natural arrangement makes it a perfect seat when one sits on it.



A priest hears confession at the Mercy/Confessional Seat

Wofa did emphasise that there is always the need to go for Sacramental confession so that our Lord Jesus Christ through the priest will forgive us and make us holy and we will be reconciled to God.



The symbolic Confessional Seat in its original form, with the seat (flat stone in the middle), the back rest (Doba tree behind the seat) and the arm rests (two stones on the left and right of the seat).

Symbols:

1. *Pɛɛpɛwa-Firi wo ara wo pɛ mu kɔ bɔneka.* (Go for confession out of your own free will).
2. *Abobɔmma- Me na mabɔ wo na me ba ne wo; Merempo wo ɛ wofom me a; san bra wɔ ahunu mu na me de wo bɛfam meho ɛ me ba bio.* (I have created you and you are my child; I will never disown you if you sin against me; come back with contrite spirit as you will be reconciled as my child again).
3. *Aprenpresa -i. Wo ka w'asɛm penpen na asa.* (Be brief, sincere and emphatic about what you say, and mean what you say, and that settles everything).
- ii. *Afei ka wo bɔne penpen, na Nyame de akyɛ wo, na asa.* (Confess your sins as they are and God will forgive you absolutely).
4. *Kookuoninsuo- Su wo bɔne ho na nya fakyɛ.* (Weep over your sins and be forgiven)

5. *Kronkronmma* - *Sɛ wɔde wo bɔne kyɛ wo a na wo ayɛ kronkronba. Afei, wobɛtumi abɛn Nyankopɔn na mo adi nkabomu.* (When you are forgiven your sins, you become a holy child. You can then come closer to God and be reconciled).
6. *Abɛ - Sɛ wo nni ahobrasɛ a worentumi nkɔ bɔneka* - if you do not have humble spirit, you cannot go for confession.

NITIRE SO



The head of Jesus (small stone) on the symbolic stone (*Akoboo* - left). A *Doba* tree on the *Akoboo* with the head of Jesus crowned with thorns on a portion as symbolically shown (right).

To the immediate right when seated on the Mercy Seat is the *Nitire So*, which is the symbol of the Head of Christ. It is a smaller rock on another symbolic rock, *Akoboo* which is much bigger. *Wofa's* explanation for the proximity of the *Nitire So* to the Mercy Seat was that wherever a priest sits to hear confession in the Universal Church, Christ is there in spirit listening to the confession and forgiving the penitent through the priest. We get closer to the head of people when we have important and personel messages exclusively for their ears. This is how intimate true penitants get to the Lord at the confessional.

Penitents are encouraged to go to the *Nitire So* to do their penance silently, and on other occasions, a priest may sit either on the Mercy Seat or close by to listen to confessions. This notwithstanding, priests hear confession of penitents at anywhere on the Holy Land.

There is a *Doba* plant which stands close to the *Nitire So* and it depicts the bowed Head of Jesus with the Crown of Thorns. Here the question is posed; are you my child? Yes, you are my child, so come! Come to me with all your sins and burdens, confess them, weep over them, do penance, resolve to do better and enjoy the blessings in my father's house.

YESU AKOMA KRONKRON (SACRED HEART OF JESUS)



The Symbolic Stone/Rock with the imprint of the body of Christ and the Heart (left) and the Symbol of the Heart of Jesus engraved on the Rock, taken at a closer shot (right).



The symbolic plants (*Doba* and Palm) located near the Heart of Jesus engraved on the Stone.

Symbols:

1. *Abɛ ɛberɛ* (oil palm or palm tree)
2. *Dɔba* (Beloved Child, Jesus)
3. *Akoma* (Heart)

Jesus a wodwoɔ na wo brɛ woho ase akoma mu, ma yɛn akoma ɛnyɛ sɛ wo dɛɛ yi. (Jesus meek and humble of heart, make our hearts like unto yours).

All three symbols speak in unison: Jesus (*Dɔba*); meek and humble (*Abɛ/ɛberɛ*); of Heart (*Akoma*); make our hearts like unto yours. Like in a resounding chorus, Mother Church is inviting us to pray to Jesus in the strongest terms to make our hearts like unto His.

One of the most beautiful and inspiring prayers of the Universal Church is indeed given a fullest most vivid and most eloquent expression in symbols by God the Divine Architect Himself.

13. THIRTEENTH STATION: Jesus is taken down from the Cross



Jesus is represented by the *Doba* on the rock which symbolises Mother Mary.



The *Doba* in a horizontal position bent in the direction of the Fourteenth Station, reminiscent of Jesus being carried to the cemetery for burial. The natural/normal position of a corpse being taken for burial.

Symbols:

Dɔba - *Dɔba no da boɔ so ansa na ama ne mu so akɔ soro.* (The *Dɔba* tree here is slightly bent on a rock before it rises again. It is a symbol of our Lord on the lap of the mother after being taken down from the Cross (Pieta).

Another *Dɔba* is positioned horizontally to the ground and projects towards the Fourteenth Station which is the cemetery. It is symbolic of a dead body being carried to the cemetery for burial. There are times pepper plants sprout on the spot and they are also symbolic of the pains Mother Mary, relatives, sympathisers and friends who were present endured.

Pɛpɛwa - *Ɛ ɛba no owuo koraa a mɛpɛ asene ɛ mɛfom woɔ.* (I will prefer death to going against your will).

Kookuonisuo (*nisuo*) - Tears- *Mary, Elizabeth, abusua ne adɔfoɔ, rekyi nisuo.*

One cannot help but shed tears when an only begotten son is lifeless and is being beheld by a sorrowful mother. Mother Mary, Elizabeth, friends and relatives are shedding profuse tears.

FOURTEENTH STATION: Jesus is laid in the Sepulchre.

A collection of many rocks of various sizes are here. At a particular spot, there is a much bigger and a wider stone which appears to have been rolled/over-turned. This stone represents the one which was used to cover the entrance of the tomb in which Jesus was laid, and which was overturned, signifying the opening of the tomb for His resurrection. In front of this particular stone is a space depicting the tomb of Jesus, and surrounded by other stones. Inside the tomb is a smaller stone coming out of the ground and is the symbol of Jesus being resurrected. Most of the stones around the tomb, according to Wɔfa, are representative of the tombs of holy souls who have died in the Lord.



The Fourteenth Station of the Cross.

Symbols:

1. **Nkanaa** -i. *Kae daa sɛ Jesus da so tease.* (Remember that Jesus is still alive).
 - ii. *Mewui, nanso masɔre tease.* (I was dead but I'm resurrected and alive).
 - iii. *Afei kae sɛ ɔbra twa owuo.* (Remember that death is the ultimate end).
2. **Kookuoninsuo** - *Nisuo*- (Tears shed for Jesus as he is dead and is being placed in the tomb. The most hardened of hearts cannot resist shedding tears when a beloved is to be left in the tomb after burial).
3. **Abɛ** - *Jesus brɛɛ ne ho ase kɔsii owuo mu.* (Jesus humbled himself submitting Himself unto death)
4. **Nkokɔ duaa/Nyanyanforowa** -*ɛyɛ dua a ɛyɛ den. Sɛ woyɛ den sɛ ɛdɛn ara a, worentumi nkwati owuo. Wɔbewu.* (This is a very tough and resilient shrub. No matter how strong or tough a person might be one cannot escape death. You will die).

EPILOGUE

Collaboration with the Church and Patronage

Akan: *Okraman kye aboa a ɔkye ma ne wura.*

English: **A game caught by a dog belongs to its master.**

These were the words of Wɔfa to the late Bishop of Sunyani, Most Reverend James Kwadwo Owusu, upon his special visit to the Grotto on the 3rd of September 1999. Before this historic visit, Wɔfa had verbally gifted the place (entire Jerusalem land, its mission and projects undertaken by Wɔfa) to the Church when he and some Church elders visited the Bishop in Sunyani for that purpose. He also made mention of the fact that anytime he had the opportunity to meet the Bishop, he reminded him of the gift. On this special occasion, Wɔfa through the then Parish Priest of Nkoranza, Very Reverend Msgr. John Nkrumah had invited him to come and have a first-hand experience of the land which he had on many occasions told him about and which he had verbally gifted to the Church. Some other people who were present included Father Andrews Addai (then Parish Priest of St. John the Evangelist Church, Bekwai in the Obuasi Diocese of the Ashanti Region who came because of the Bishop's visit), the then Church President of the St. Martin de Porres Parish at Nkoranza, Mr. Peter Akwasi Kumah, Mr. Francis Asiedu (Akonta), Mr. Anthony Adjei (Catechist – Jerusalem No. 2), and a few other elders of the Church. Francis Asiedu and Anthony Adjei are now permanent residents of the Grotto. Wɔfa's main aim of inviting the Bishop was to assure the Bishop that the entire land, mission and project of Jerusalem No. 2 were/are for the Church. As the Diocesan head of the Church, this could appropriately be done only through him. Wɔfa's conversion to Catholicism and the heroic zeal with which he spread the religion among his people was what led to the discovery of the Grotto. Therefore, he saw himself more as an instrument/vessel than anything else through whom God had fulfilled his Divine mission.



The late Bishop James Kwado Owusu delivering a Homily at the Mass he celebrated at the Grotto during his visit.



The late Bishop of Sunyani, Most Rev. James Kwadwo Owusu on a visit to the Grotto. Rev. Mnsgr. John Nkrumah then Parish Priest of Nkoranza Parish is on the right.



Fr. Andy (left), His Lordship Most Reverend Dominic Yeboah Nyarko, Bishop of the Techiman Diocese (middle) and Fr. Augustine Amoako (right of the Arch-Diocese of Kumasi) at Mass.

The Grotto comes directly under the Nkoranza Parish. Until 1973 when St. Martin de Porres Parish, Nkoranza was created, the Catholic Churches at Nkoranza and the neighbouring towns and villages were under the jurisdiction of St. Paul's Parish (now St. Paul's Cathedral in Techiman). Wɔfa therefore linked up with the Parish Priests and the Assistant Priests at Techiman right from his primary evangelising efforts at Akonkonti Odumase, founding of the Church at Asempanaye, and his final journey to Jerusalem No. 2. These priests provided for the pastoral needs, counselling and guidance for Wɔfa and the Christian communities he started or established.

From the time of conversion to death Wɔfa saw himself more as an instrument of God and working in union with the Church. Currently, the parish priest at Nkoranza is in charge of the Grotto, and in that capacity celebrates Mass and provides other services of which only an ordained Catholic priest has the mandate to provide. The associate/assistant priests also do assist the parish priest in ministering to the faithful at the Grotto.

The number of pilgrims keeps increasing consistently. Daily patronage is low as compared to the monthly congregational activities. These activities take place in the week in which we have the first Friday of the month.²⁰ Usually, pilgrims start trickling in from the Tuesday preceding the first Friday of the month to participate in the activities which last till Saturday morning. Friday marks the climax of the activities after which some people may leave. Masses are celebrated on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Besides the masses, other activities take place; Divine Mercy prayers (usually at dawn), Stations of the Cross on Fridays, devotional prayers to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary. There is also time for testimonies, sharing of dreams, dedication of pilgrims, teaching of the history of the place to pilgrims visiting for the first time, and a walk through the Stations during which the revealed symbols and Stations are explained to pilgrims. Pilgrims come from all over the country and beyond.

The schedule/programme of activities is not static. They can change. However, serious consideration should be given to some aspects of the programme that appear to be of a permanent character linked up to the place.



Pilgrims undergoing/praying the Stations of the Cross.

²⁰ The first Friday of every month is the Day dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus while the first Saturday is the Day dedicated in honour of the Virgin Mary.



These pilgrims have just finished undertaking/praying the Stations/Way of the Cross. Some can be seen to be signing themselves with the Water in the cow-shaped crevice.

Apart from the Parish Priest of Nkoranza and his assistants, other members of the clergy/religious including bishops, priests and sisters from the various dioceses/parishes in the country, sometimes visit either privately or to participate in the congregational activities, or celebrate Mass. Below are photographs depicting some of these visits.



The retired Archbishop of the Tamale Arch-Diocese, Most Reverend Gregory Kpiebaya pays Wɔfa a visit. Wɔfa stops over here to explain some of the symbols to the Bishop and his entourage as he leads them on a tour of the Grotto.



Wofa and some of his assistants, Archbishop Gregory Kpiebaya (now retired Archbishop of Tamale Arch-Diocese and some Reverend Sisters in a group photograph at the Grotto (left). Archbishop Gregory Kpiebaya crowns his pilgrimage with the Celebration of the Eucharist (right).



Archbishop Gabriel Justice Anokye of the Catholic Archdiocese of Kumasi in a group picture with Akonta, Eno Mary, and some devotees during a visit to the Grotto on 21st December 2017.

Some priests also have a special attachment to the Grotto. One of such priests is Reverend Father Andrews Addai. He frequented the place long before he completed his university education at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kumasi, where he obtained a Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture in 1987. He had wished to enter into large scale commercial farming close to Jerusalem No. 2 after his course. However, upon completion he felt quite convinced that God had a different plan for him. The call to ministry became so overriding that he decided to enter the seminary. He entered the St. Paul Major Seminary (Sowutuom) as a candidate for the Kumasi Diocese in 1987. He completed successfully and was ordained a priest on 16th July 1994, among a group of others by Most Reverend Peter Kwasi Sarpong, Archbishop Emeritus (then Bishop of the Kumasi Diocese). He served as the Bishop's secretary after his ordination. When the Obuasi and Konongo-Mampong Dioceses were carved out of the Kumasi Diocese in 1995, by virtue of his hometown (Abuontem) being within the Obuasi Diocese, on the Kumasi Lake Bosomtwe road, he had to go to the Obuasi Diocese. There, he was assigned first to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish (Akrokerri) and later to the St. John the Evangelist Parish (Bekwai-Ashanti) before leaving for missionary work in the United States of America (USA) in 2000. While in the USA, he worked in the Diocese of Syracuse as an associate pastor at St. John the Evangelist Parish at New Hartford in New York. He returned to the country in 2002 and was assigned to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish at Beposo, near Lake Bosomtwe in the Diocese of Obuasi.

Indeed, Father Andy's first contact with the Grotto can be traced to as far back as the late 1970s, and since then, his attachment to the place has remained so strong right up to his student days at KNUST, as a seminarian during his formation, and as a priest working for the Kumasi and Obuasi Dioceses, and later Sunyani and Techiman Dioceses.

His decision to truly identify himself with the Grotto by resorting to a "self-imposed exile" from his hometown Abuontem, demonstrates how

inseparable he is from it. He took a firm decision to make Jerusalem No. 2 his permanent domicile (hometown). With this idea, he talked to his Bishop- the late Most Reverend Thomas Kwaku Mensah who was then Bishop of the Obuasi Diocese. He also talked to the Most Reverend Matthew Kwasi Gyamfi Bishop of the Sunyani Diocese, whose area of jurisdiction then stretched to cover Jerusalem No. 2 before the creation of the Techiman Diocese.

Both Bishops showed an understanding of his situation and readily agreed to take the necessary steps to enable him fulfil his desire. Bishop Thomas Kwaku Mensah graciously accepted his request for excardination from Obuasi Diocese while Bishop Matthew Kwasi Gyamfi embraced him and incardinated him into the Diocese of Sunyani in 2005. He was assigned as Chaplain to the Holy Family Hospital and Holy Family Nursing and Midwifery Training College at Berekum. While working in this capacity, he came regularly to participate in the activities of the Grotto.

Ordinarily, these letters of excardination and incardination are not put in the public domain, but we (authors) felt that the reasons assigned have an eternal appeal to anyone who hears about Jerusalem No. 2 to desire to visit the place. Besides, they constitute an integral part of the history without which an aspect of it would be left out. We believe the letters have a prophetic undertone inviting or urging people to visit this 'Divine Providence Grotto' to experience the Lord in a unique and special way. It is also an eternal appeal to Christ's faithful, laity, religious, clergy and people of good will to contribute to the promotion of the development of Jerusalem No. 2 as per the resources one is endowed with and the position one holds.

Below are the letters of request for excardination and incardination.

SACRED HEART PARISH-BEPOSO

(CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF OBUASI)



Post Office Box KN 453
Konongo-Ashanti
Ghana-West Africa

21st July 2004

RT. REV. THOMAS K. MENSAH (BISHOP)
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF OBUASI
P. O. BOX 701
OBUASI – ASHANTI.

My Lord Bishop,

HUMBLE REQUEST FOR EXCARDINATION/CHANGE IN DOMICILE FOR THE SAKE OF JERUSALEM.

Peace and love to you my Lord.

I was privileged to have been introduced to JERUSALEM (a Holy Land in Ghana near Nkoranza in the Brong Ahafo Region) as a ~~sixth~~-former ~~somewhere~~ in 1979/80. There was such a tremendous faith-experience that I resolved to make the place my permanent home. The desire to make Jerusalem my home grew even stronger when I had the opportunity to ~~do~~ a degree course in Agriculture at K.N.U.S.T. There were plans to establish my private farms there.

Then came the call to the priesthood. Thinking that Nkoranza was my hometown, priest-friends I had known at Nkoranza who were the first to have known about my call, helped me to contact the vocation's office at Sunyani. Then a student at the university, the Chaplain who knew me as coming from Abuontem threw more light on the linkage between one's hometown and the Diocese that one can belong. That brought me back to the then Kumasi Diocese. However, this has not ~~broken~~ my bonds with Jerusalem.

Ever since 1979/80, I have never ceased going to Jerusalem. My Lord Bishop, the fact is I am emotionally, psychologically and spiritually attached to Jerusalem. I would also want to be physically attached to the place. Ten years after my humble services to Kumasi and Obuasi Dioceses, the desire to make Jerusalem my permanent home is even stronger.

When one is at home or feels at home, one is at peace to carry out one's responsibilities. Honestly, I feel some restlessness without any official bond to Jerusalem as my home. I was relieved when I realised that I could have recourse to the church's provision for Excardination/Incardination and/or acquisition of Domicile to meet my heartfelt desire. I talked this over with the late Rt. Rev. James Kwadwo Owusu (may his soul rest in peace), after we had met at Jerusalem during his pastoral visit to the place. We were at an advanced stage, sorting things out when your Lordship asked me to go for two years of missionary work in the Diocese of Syracuse in the U.S.A.

My Lord, it is not easy for me to make this request. But I feel it very compelling and overpowering. So I pray you please facilitate the process of my Excardination from Obuasi Diocese to be Incardinated into Sunyani Diocese for the sake of Jerusalem our happy home. These choice and decision have been made after many years of careful thought, much prayer and serious reflection.

The story about Jerusalem is long. But in brief: It is a Catholic Prayer/Retreat Center dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The instrument God used to make the Sacred place known, Uncle George Akwasi Agyei of blessed memory, was exiled from his hometown to Jerusalem for the sake of his faith as a Catholic Christian. This was providential, as the Lord had embedded on this holy grounds some religious scenes. Gradually, Uncle George was guided to unveil some of these religious scenes. These scenes have touched countless number of people who visit this site. They are faith-enriching and steepens one's faith as a Catholic.

Uncle George was exiled to Jerusalem from his hometown. He experienced God in a most profound way at this new home. I have seen some of the lay faithful who have left their original homes to make Jerusalem their home. I am also compelled from within to identify myself with uncle George by imposing a "voluntary exile" on myself in order to make Jerusalem my home, the consequence of which is the acquisition of a new Domicile.

There is this phrase in the "Hail Holy Queen" prayer which also impels me.

"...And after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb Jesus..."

Even though eschatological, when applied to my situation, I hope to encounter Jesus in a new way after this "voluntary exile". How new I may not know, but definitely I know it will be for my spiritual good and the good of the Church. It will enhance my life as a priest and my way of doing things. Definitely, I will also find more fulfillment. I would also enjoy that inner peace to deliver since an inner struggle will have been put to rest.

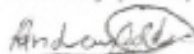
This move is for me, a prophetic call which demands a prophetic response. Being excardinated from Obuasi Diocese and receiving incardination into Sunyani Diocese for the sake of Jerusalem will bear eloquent testimony to the cause of the place. It will announce Jerusalem and the tremendous spiritual resourcefulness of the place to many people who otherwise may not get to hear about the place. Others who might have heard and known about the place but have been cold ~~could be challenged~~. ~~Knowing~~ very well that I could be misunderstood by some few and still others ridiculing the whole idea. But a prophet should hold on to his convictions.

My Lord Bishop, I would be most pleased if by the 1st of January, 2005, everything would have been put in place for me to begin a new page in my priestly life for Sunyani Diocese.

I do count on your fatherly guidance and help to enable me to have a more fulfilling ministry. I know if there is any blessing in this move, you my Lord and my mother Diocese Obuasi, will not be left out.

Thank you my Lord for your co-operation. Prayerful best wishes.

Sincerely yours,



ANDREWS ADDAI (REV. FR.)

SACRED HEART PARISH-BEPOSO



(CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF OBUASI)

Post Office Box KN 453
Konongo-Ashanti
Ghana-West Africa
18TH AUGUST, 2004

MOST REV. MATTHEW K. GYAMFI (BISHOP)
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SUNYANI
P.O. BOX 450
SUNYANI-BRONG AHAFO

My Lord Bishop,

REQUEST FOR INCARDINATION INTO THE DIOCESE OF SUNYANI

After careful thought, much prayer and extensive consultation with some confreres and my Spiritual Director, I have come to the decision to request for Incardination into your Diocese, the Catholic Diocese of Sunyani.

I have explained to you earlier about the genesis of this movement since the time of the late Bishop Owusu. In pursuance of this goal, I contacted V. Rev. Seth Osei-Agyeman when he was the Administrator of the Diocese after I had returned from a two-year missionary work in the US.

Since my first exposure to Jerusalem, near Nkoranza, I have had a special attachment to the shrine. It was the source of my vocation and continues to be spiritual resource and strength to my ministry as a priest. I wish to be physically close to this source of spiritual strength to enhance my priestly ministry.

I believe that when I am accepted among your presbyterate and I am domiciled in the Diocese of Sunyani, I will be more at home to be part of Jerusalem and become spiritually enriched to exercise my priestly ministry.

Please find attached my request to Most Rev. Thomas K. Mensah, the Bishop of Obuasi, and the background I gave him to justify my request for excardination. The Bishop of Obuasi has accepted my proposal on condition that the Bishop of Sunyani accepts me and gives me incardination.

I would therefore be most grateful if my request for incardination into the Diocese of Sunyani is favourably considered. I pledge my obedience to you and would accept any appointment to any part of the Diocese where my services will be needed.

My prayerful best wishes to you. Many thanks, my Lord, for your co-operation.

Sincerely yours,

Andrews Addai

ANDREWS ADDAI (REV. FR)

Eventually, Father Andy became the Parish Priest of the St. Martin de Porres Parish at Nkoranza and the overseer of Jerusalem No.2 (2007-2010). It was during this time that the Catholic Diocese of Techiman was carved out of the Catholic Diocese of Sunyani with Bishop Dominic Yeboah Nyarko as its first Bishop in 2008. After a period of three years as the Parish Priest of Nkoranza, he was transferred to the Holy Family Catholic Church at Kenten in Techiman as the Parish Priest and at the same time as Chaplain to the non-Catholic institutions in the Diocese. He was relieved of his position as the parish priest at Kenten to be solely in charge of the non-Catholic institutions. As the Chaplain of the non-Catholic schools in the Diocese of Techiman he resided at the St. Francis of Assisi Parish at Tuobodom for one year. From Tuobodom, he was relocated to the St. Paul's Cathedral at Techiman, and holding on to the chaplaincy work at the non-Catholic schools. His work as chaplain to the non-Catholic Schools was terminated in 2016, and he was assigned as the Chaplain/Spiritual Director of the St. Francis Minor Seminary Senior High School at Buoyem, while still in residence at the Cathedral. In August 2017, he moved into residence at Our Lady of Calvary Grotto at Asueyi in Techiman but still the Chaplain/Spiritual Director of the Minor Seminary at Buoyem. All this while, he is in close contact with the Grotto.

His meeting with Marciana (co-author) on the 2nd of June 2014 at the Grotto was a most wonderful coincidence.²¹ Marciana was there on one of her visits to collect more information on this book project.

²¹ Marciana until that day had been searching for Father Andy for some time. She had started the compilation with no intention of any collaborative work. After writing up to a point she realised something was missing. She decided to discontinue with the work and set about to search for it. It was difficult to figure out what exactly it was, but the work had to wait until the missing link was discovered. On the Good Friday of 2014, her attention was drawn to the photo of the apparition of the Virgin Mary when she appeared at the Grotto. This occurred just after her return from Church (St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church at Apemso near KNUST, Kumasi) where she had gone to take part in observing the Stations of the Cross. The presence of Father Andy in the photo convinced Marciana that she had to see him. They had never met before apart from Father celebrating Mass at the Grotto and Marciana being part of the larger congregation. All attempts to

Meanwhile, the idea of putting on record the history of Jerusalem No. 2 was with Father Andy all along and he had also made earlier attempts to produce one. This book became the product of that meeting as they agreed on a merger to compile a single volume.



The newly-ordained Father Andy in a group picture with some friends including Rev. Fr. Prof. John Appiah-Poku (KNUST), Wɔfa, the late *Nkoranzamanhene*, Okatakyie Agyeman Kudom IV and some of his sub-chiefs. It was on the occasion of his first Mass at the Grotto following his ordination in 1994.

reach him were not successful until the 2nd of June 2014. She was the first to arrive at the Grotto and great was her surprise when the man she had been searching for emerged unexpectedly some ten minutes later. He was also there on one of his usual visits to “home”. Marciana walked up to him, introduced herself and her mission. She then realised how much Father himself has been and is part of the whole story.



As Parish Priest of Nkoranza from 2007 to 2010, Father Andy is seen here celebrating Mass at the Grotto.



Father Andy giving a homily at the Grotto.

All is well that ends well:

Acknowledgement and Reconciliation at last.

Our Lord Jesus Christ in His entire ministry never had the opportunity to be fully reconciled with many of the forces which opposed Him. He did prophesy in his own life time that the Son of Man would suffer many things: rejection by the chief priests and teachers of the law and be put to death (physical death but resurrection to follow in three days). To the people, he said to follow him is to take up the Cross each day and follow Him. By this our Lord meant clearly that to be a practising Christian, one should also expect some kind of suffering which could take many forms – rejection, humiliation, self-denial, sacrifice and even death. True to his words, many of the early Christians who followed the Lord suffered greatly and died at the hands of their enemies. Contrary to the experience of our spiritual forefathers, many people today can freely profess their faith with little or no fear of intimidation. This is made possible, largely by virtue of the universal declaration of human rights. Armed with nothing but genuine faith in Christ, many people today are able to break through thick and thin to give testimony to their Christian faith. People are able to cross their national boundaries to evangelise and establish churches of their own in faraway places.

The struggles of Wɔfa and his ultimate victory in the midst of opposing forces, both physical and spiritual that aimed at cutting short his mission is only one of such examples in modern times. It was quite a tortuous journey, a long period of trials and suffering, spanning through a period of not less than half a century, but with results that are lasting and worth the sacrifices.

The rancour that characterised the early relations between Wɔfa and his opponents eventually melted into acceptance and less resistance. He was accorded the necessary recognition and allowed to continue with his mission. Some key personalities like the late *Nkoranzamanhene* Okatakyie Agyeman Kudom IV, the late *Sesemanhene/Nifahene* of

Nkoranza Nana Kofi Baffoe, and the late Nana Kofi Gyimadu did visit Jerusalem as the fame of the place grew from strength to strength to witness to the truth of Christianity while Wɔfa George was alive. Below are some pictures that depict this new spirit of understanding and acceptance.



Wɔfa (left), the late Nana Kofi Baffoe ex-Sessemanhene-Nifahene of Nkoranza (middle), the ex-Nkoranzamanhene, the late Okatakyie Agyeman Kudom IV (right) and some elders of Nkoranza at the Grotto.



Wɔfa sandwiched between the Nkoranzamanhene, late Okatakyie Agyeman Kudom IV (left) and late Nana Kofi Baffoe, ex-Sessemanhene at the 12th Station of the Cross.

In the early stages of his mission, Wɔfa did not get the support of his uncle, Nana Kofi Gyimadu, the then *Adontenhene*. The uncle condemned his mission publicly but Wɔfa still related well with him and all those who opposed him. He did not begrudge his uncle but continued to pray for understanding and appreciation of his mission by his own people. He achieved this in his life time in a very admirable and wonderful fashion. The picture below depicts the conciliatory mood between uncle and nephew.



Wɔfa in a handshake with his uncle, late Nana Kofi Gymadu (*Adontenhene*). A wonderful reunion indeed. Uncle now at peace with nephew.



Nana Adutwumwaa Dudaa Kani (*Nkoranzamanhema*), Nana Afua Kwaa (*Sessemanhema*), and some elders on a visit to the Grotto.



Nana Kwabena Tetteh II (*Sessemahene/Nifahene* of Nkoranza Traditional Area, seated middle, *Bosomfoɔ* Kwasi Ankomako V (2nd from right), Kyeame Kwasi Kontoh IV (seated 1st from right), Nana Afia Kwaa I, *Sessemahemaa* (2nd from left) and some elders of Sesseman. During Wɔfa's time and now, there have been healthy and cordial relationship with Nana *Nifahene* and the elders of Sesseman. Nananom and Elders honour invitations to special occasions at the Grotto and the management of the Grotto also honour invitations to their festivals and other social events.

Indeed, the relationship between Wɔfa, the Church and the traditional authorities has been very cordial, characterised by respect and mutual understanding. When the late Bishop James Kwadwo Owusu visited Nkoranza/Grotto in 1999, the late Okatakyie Agyeman Kudom IV (*Nkoranzamanhene*) petitioned the Bishop to develop and elevate the status of Jerusalem No. 2. to national and international standards. He acknowledged that God has used one of their sons to reveal the holy place. It is customary for a visiting Bishop to pay homage to the chief in the parish he visits. It was in the course of honouring this custom that the Chief took the opportunity to make the request before the Bishop. He admitted that his predecessors opposed Wɔfa because he had introduced something that was contrary to some of their traditional religious beliefs and practices. He was nonetheless happy that it had turned out to be a blessing and something great for the common good.

Transition and Legacy of Wɔfa

Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, respected by all the people, stood up...and said to them, "...have nothing to do with these men, and let them go. For if this endeavour or this activity is of human origin, it will destroy itself. But if it comes from God, you will not be able to destroy them: you may even find yourselves fighting against God (ACTS 5:34 -39).



George Akwasi Agyei (Wɔfa George), 1897-2001.

Wɔfa was an epitome of the characteristics of the Divine calling – God most often chooses the poor, uneducated and the lowly. Wɔfa was one of such persons, who from a very humble background was called by God and entrusted with such a huge mission. Knowing his non-literate background, Wɔfa repeated the story over and over again for a

long period of time with consistency that they registered on the minds of those who were privileged to be closer to him. It is for this reason that, much reference is made to the vernacular (Twi) versions in order to capture the original meaning as related by him.

He sponsored the education of some people, learning of trade for others, footed medical bills, supported those who had volunteered to come and stay with him and help him in the work. People with other peculiar needs were not left out. No need crossed his path unnoticed. He helped to the best of his ability and resources. He lived by his name, and was truly a Wɔfa to all.

Some people may ask why people leave other grottoes closer to them and come to Jerusalem No. 2. This is a common practice in the Catholic Church. People embark on pilgrimage to sacred places even though they may be close to other sacred places in their villages, towns, parishes, dioceses, countries or continents. It is more of an undertaking in faith for which reason people go to these places. The unique spiritual experiences people have upon encounter with the Lord on the land are a true reflection of the uniqueness of this Grotto. Jerusalem No. 2 to us is unlike any other place in its origin, the origin of the symbols, and the natural match up of these symbols and what they represent. God had prepared this land with all its symbols intact waiting to be revealed to the world in His own appointed time. It was through Wɔfa, the unassuming instrument that God used to make His plans become concretised.

With most diseases that people brought to his attention for Divine intervention/healing, he would in most cases recommend a visit to the hospital (orthodox medicine). He firmly believed that health care workers are partners in the healing ministry of Christ and the Church. He believed that spiritual and orthodox healing complement each other.

He believed in the inseparability of the Two Hearts – the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. He was a staunch member of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Confraternity and the Legion of Mary. He would always encourage Catholic pilgrims to join these societies. Through his encouragement,

many pilgrims have joined the Sacred Heart of Jesus Confraternity after going through the nine first Friday Communion.

Wɔfa lived as if he had taken a perpetual vow of poverty. He owned virtually nothing and died with little belongings. He is truly an example of selflessness, detachment from materialism and a man always for others.

The use of drums in Christian worship was one aspect of African/Ghanaian musical culture which Wɔfa introduced into the Church. Drums are used in making appellations to chiefs and other dignitaries at their death and other important occasions. Wɔfa therefore beat the drum on Good Fridays at Jerusalem No. 2 to announce the death of Christ and mourn Him as the King of Kings. This was very much appreciated by Rev. Father Martin Wesseling SMA, a Dutch Catholic Priest who was then the Parish Priest of the St. Martin de Porres Parish at Nkoranza. He endorsed the use of drum in worship by inviting Wɔfa to use it in the procession and enthronement of Christ at the Corpus Christi celebration, as well as at the elevation of the Lord during the Eucharistic celebration in 1976. On other occasions, he made use of him and his drum.



Wɔfa in action on the drums

Wɔfa peacefully joined his Maker on 3rd January 2001 at the ripe age of 104. By this time, he was quite convinced that he had successfully left behind a group of competent disciples to continue from where he had ended. Like the mission of our Lord Jesus Christ, only time would tell whether Wɔfa's mission is truly of God or his own creation. The high patronage of the Grotto today and the living testimonies of real encounters with the Lord, divine favours/healings and multiple conversion stories confirm the Divine origin of Wɔfa's mission as well as activities of the Grotto.

The last days of Wɔfa were marked by hints of his departure but which no one could make out. About six months before his passing on, he deliberated on the question of life and death with a group of pilgrims.

Making reference to his advanced age, he wanted to know from their point of view whether his death was going to have any significance for the sustenance of the Grotto. As should be expected, everyone wished that his physical presence was more important than death. He again put the same question to his assistants and their answer was the same. Wɔfa replied that they had all failed. He asked again whether the mission of Christ saw much expansion during His life time or after His death.

They all agreed that it was after His death that Christianity expanded tremendously. He explained that since it was so with Christianity and he was following the steps of Christ, the truth of his mission was to be tested following his death. He pointed out to them that if truly his mission was from God (the Holy Trinity), they would experience much growth, expansion and continuity. If on the other hand it was not of God, then his death was going to bring everything to an end.

Palace (Ahenfie)

Just before he died, Wɔfa started a building project as a palace for Christ the King. It was in the name of the Holy Trinity that he was sent into exile. It was also in the name of Ntoa god (*Ntoabosom*)

whose taboos Wɔfa broke that he was sent into exile. According to Wɔfa, the traditional priest of Ntoa is housed in a one storey palace. He therefore decided to build a two storey palace to honour the Trinity where the high Priest, Jesus Christ, the King of Kings and the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of Heaven and Earth would be enthroned. This was started in the year 2000 before he passed on in 2001. After his death, the leadership of the Grotto did not abandon Wɔfa's cherished idea. In collaboration with the Parish Priests who have been to Nkoranza ever since, the project has been pursued unrelentlessly. This project was so dear to Wɔfa that he wanted to complete it as soon as possible. Even though Jerusalem No. 2 continuously fulfills its Divine mission, Wɔfa believed the completion of the project and the enthronement of the King of Kings will yield the fullest potential of this Divine mission. Jerusalem's reach will then achieve expansive heights and draw many to Christ Jesus the King. The project is on-going yet to be completed. The physical structure is in shape but a lot of interior works remain to be done. Below is the building.



The Palace (*Ahenfie*)

The year 2010 marked the Golden Jubilee of Jerusalem No. 2 and everything about the place has witnessed manifold blessings from God Almighty. Three Catholic bishops were in attendance to celebrate Mass at the climax of the celebrations. They were the Bishops of the Catholic Dioceses of Techiman (Most Reverend Dominic Yeboah Nyarko); Sunyani (Most Reverend Mathew Kwasi Gyamfi) and Obuasi (Most Reverend Justice Gabriel Yaw Anokye, now Metropolitan Archbishop of the Catholic Archdiocese of Kumasi). Also in attendance were the representatives of the Chief of Sesseman (*Nifahene* of Nkoranza), the Queenmother of Sesseman (Nana Afua Kwaa), as well as some elders and other royals. The number of pilgrims keeps increasing, physical structures are springing up gradually and one can only expect even greater things as we move into the future.



Buildings put up by some pilgrims.

Some Memorable Scenes at the climax of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations



Fr. Andy receiving an award from the Bishop of Techiman, His Lordship Most Rev. Dominic Yeboah Nyarko.



The then Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Obuasi, His Lordship Most Rev. Gabriel Justice Anokye (now the Metropolitan Archbishop of the Kumasi Arch-diocese) giving a homily/sermon at the Mass to climax the celebration.



Consecration of some members of the clergy to the Sacred Heart of Jesus (left). A section of the clergy during the Eucharistic Celebration (right).

A Prophecy Fulfilled

To what extent has the prophecy concerning Mary Adwoa Baagyei (Eno Mary) come true? Prior to her birth, it was revealed to Wɔfa that he would beget a female child to be called Mary, who would be of great assistance to his mission both in life and after his death. Following the death of her mother, Eno Mary and her siblings were taken to Yefri to be cared for by their grandmother. It all went on well until one day when it was realised that for reasons of old age she was no longer capable of caring for them. They therefore returned to join Wɔfa at the Grotto. While her other siblings remained with their father, she was taken in by an aunt. She recollects that as a young girl in her teens, some of her maternal relations attempted to talk her out of following her father. Reference was usually made to the fact that as an only female child of her mother in a matrilineal setting, marriage and childbirth could not be compromised for anything. The continuous pressure to settle down with a man and start a family eventually culminated in her acceptance of a marriage proposal from Francis Asiedu (Akonta). She picked seed before Wɔfa received news of what was underway. Wɔfa expressed his disappointment in tears but later made arrangements for the two to have holy matrimony (in 1970). The couple lost this first child and five other children they subsequently gave birth to. The couple and Wɔfa believed that it was God's way of seasoning them for the task ahead.

They weighed the situation against the revelation concerning her birth and read a deeper meaning into it.

Wɔfa saw in her a mother to the countless people who would throng the Grotto to seek God's hand in their life. The bitterness that usually result from such losses was not experienced at all by Eno Mary and her husband. They were convinced that God had a hand in all that was happening. Nevertheless, God blessed them with four children who are all alive today. Some members of the extended family had attempted to disrupt God's plan based on man's narrow view of the world and the expectations or norms of the cultural milieu in which they found themselves. However, God has shown that all things work well for those who love him.

Eno Mary and Akonta settled at the Grotto as special assistants to Wɔfa. The many years of performing this role has fully equipped Francis Asiedu (Akonta) in particular to properly step into the shoes of Wɔfa after his passing on. Though Eno Mary had even before birth been assigned the role she now performs, it can be inferred that to a very large extent Akonta was bound to come her way to ensure the sustenance of the mission. They succeeded Wɔfa after his death and have under them other assistants who help in managing the place. They have fully dedicated themselves to the performance of this duty for the rest of their lives. They are really happy about their role in continuing with the mission of Wɔfa and are parents/guardians to many people. They see this not just as a mere duty but a real calling to help give hope to the many people who come to the place with their various needs. For the rest of their lives they would dedicate people to God and do all they can to preserve the Holy Land (Jerusalem No. 2) for God's people.

In accordance with what has been strictly adhered to by Wɔfa, every activity at the Grotto is performed in agreement with laid down principles of the Roman Catholic Church, and under the direct supervision of the Nkoranza Parish Priest. It remains as one of the most important duties of Akonta and Eno Mary to make it known

to everyone that no matter the degree of involvement of any single individual or group of people, themselves not exempted, in the affairs of the Grotto, the Holy Land of Jerusalem No. 2 and all that relates to the place are held under the guardianship of the Catholic Church. Indeed, they consider themselves as labourers in the Lord's vineyard, and they extend a hand of invitation to all and sundry to willingly and genuinely partake in this onerous but highly rewarding religious undertaking. They pray that as prophesied by Wofa, the time will come when the Grotto will come under the total management of designated ministers of the one Holy Roman Catholic Church. It is envisaged that resident priest(s) would be assigned to oversee the programmes, activities and development of the Grotto at God's own appointed time.



Eno Mary (Mary Adwoa Baagyei) and Akonta (Francis Asiedu). They run the day to day activities of the Grotto with the help of other assistants.

Indeed a Mystery and a Reality

The Lord Almighty says, the time is coming when people from many cities will come to Jerusalem. Those from one city will say to those from another we are going to worship the Lord Almighty and pray for His blessing. Come with us! Many peoples and powerful nations will come to Jerusalem to worship the Lord Almighty, and to pray for His blessing. ZECHARIAH 8: 20- 22.

Once a man (non-Christian) came to the Grotto wearing his religious garb. After listening to the story of the place, praying the Way/Stations of the Cross and listening to the explanations that go with the various Stations, he removed his religious garb at the 14th Station. What he said was that the trees/plants and stones there are the handiwork of God. He believed no other being could have put these there. This confirms what the Bible says about Jesus Christ as the saviour of the world- as God's beloved Son who left His throne of glory to become one like us, to suffer and to die to save humankind. Only God the Creator could have done what is in Jerusalem No. 2. There and then he embraced Jesus as his Lord and saviour.

These symbols are natural and simple but speak to a deeper religious TRUTH which are real to only the believer. The man's experience of the place is symbolic, meaning that any other person irrespective of the religious background who comes to Jerusalem with faith and trust will have a real and living encounter with the Divine, and will be encouraged and inspired to remove whatever garb that is preventing him from encountering Christ.

The Lord says I will bring you lasting prosperity; the wealth of the nations will flow to you like a river that never goes dry. You will be like a child that is nursed by its mother, carried in her arms and treated with love. I will comfort you in Jerusalem, as a mother comforts her child. (ISAIAH 66: 12- 13)

The Lord invites us to have an encounter with Him and be blessed and again invites us to help build up Jerusalem with what He has endowed us with. People journey to “Jerusalem No. 1” (original Jerusalem in the Middle East), for religious encounter with our Lord and try to support in their own way to it’s growth and development. The Lord also invites us to Jerusalem No. 2 to have a similar experience and support it’s growth and development.

Yes what a mystery - things and events not fully comprehensible with human understanding, but encounters with faith throw more light, clarifies and make things real.

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