

....mama, go in peace!

Nothing can be compared to the death of a mother. As long as there are clouds, there is hope of rain. When the rain stops and the sky clears, the heart is warmed up by the feeling of impending warmth of a peering sun. When the pot is boiling and the room is filled with sweet smells of food, there is hope of food for a rumbling stomach. But if the sky is bereft of clouds, any hope of rain is an illusion. If the rain continues to pour with an attendant deluge sweeping off everything in a tsunami fashion, the hope of sun and shine recedes. And if the kitchen is as silent as an abandoned house, the hopeless stomach continues to announce its hunger thunderously. This fact of erosion of the foundation of hope is what makes the death of a mother very painful and seemingly unbearable.

Mother means nourishment. Mother represents care. Mother reassures love. Mother presents an indelible picture of emotional protection. And mother guarantees the kind of food which is so different from any other in the world. So when the tree falls, there is this emptiness that laughs at every expression in human words and language. This explains why I understand you my son Ejike and members of your family. I understand your pains. I understand the meaning of your teary eyes. I understand the gaping mouth and unuttered questions. I understand the excruciating pains of your heart.

However, I know that the world is full of sweeping surprises. I know that when we think it is all dark, a little light suddenly peers through a blanket of darkness. I know that the Lord does give Manna in a desert of pessimism. I know that water can break through the rock in a hopelessly arid zone. This explains why I am confident that you will find consolation somehow. Our Christian faith assures us of the Lord's constant presence and help even in the midst of darkness. As Christians let us hold on to the Lord's promise. The Lord will certainly send the rain of consolation to water the aridity of the human soul, and the sunshine to tear apart the thick wall of sorrow in the landscape of your soul.

Finally, mama went through a long period of suffering before her death. I am convinced that she has been purified in the furnace of human sufferings. Thus she has gone to meet her Lord in a state of perfect purification. This means she has become our ambassador in the beautiful city of God. She will certainly present you and your needs to the Lord who loves her indescribably. This should be a great consolation to you and me. So my thoughts and prayers are with you as I offer masses for mama and all of you! Mama, go in peace!

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