

TRIBUTE TO A SPECIAL MOTHER — MY BACKBONE

Today, I celebrate the life of a rare gem, my mother, Mamu, as I fondly call her. A woman whose love, strength and patience shaped the person I am today. My mum was a caring and devoted mother and grandmother who loved her children and grandchildren wholeheartedly. Her love was not just spoken but shown through her sacrifices, guidance and constant presence in our lives. She always advised us to care for and tolerate one another's grey areas for the love and unity of the family. Her kindness, generosity and warmth created a home filled with comfort and reassurance.

My mum called me by my special pet name, Odoh (Odoziakwu), given to me and fondly used by my late dad, and she would advise me to take life the way it presents itself. This was because of the significant emotional trauma I went through in losing my young and lovely spouse, so that I could take care of the children left behind for me. She was a woman of peace; she lived a life that encouraged harmony, patience and understanding in any environment she found herself in.

Mamu, you became everything to me here on earth — my mother, friend, partner and mentor. As the widow you have left behind, who then can fill this vacuum for me? You comforted me in times of trouble, always with a calm response to every storm of life I passed through. Mamu, you were truly a selfless mother who accommodated everyone that came around you with an open heart and compassion.

Your unwavering love and support were a constant echo of God's love, a foundation upon which I built my life. I am privileged to call you “my Mother,” Mamu, and I count it as one of my biggest blessings from God. Your life was a precious gift to humanity, and your memories will forever be treasured.

Thank you for being my hero, my anchor and my constant inspiration. Your wisdom and love, which sustained your beautiful home in unity, will forever be etched in my heart, guiding me through life's journey.

Mamu, you did not live to enjoy the fruits of your labour of bringing up your children and grandchildren, especially the ones handed over to you in trust to oversee their welfare, until the time came for you to rest and be cared for by them. You wrestled through numerous

difficult health challenges for years, until that fateful day, the 2nd of May 2026, a day I will always remember in sadness, when the Lord decided to call you home to rest and be freed from further fleshly torture by your enemy. However, Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 says: “To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven — a time to be born, and a time to die.” Mamu, no matter how hard this enemy fought against you, I believe you accomplished your purpose on earth. Though you are out of sight, your legacies and sweet memories are immortalised in my heart.

My Mamu, Nnemuoma, I will miss your love and our sweet conversations. I love you, but God loves you more, so sleep on in the Lord till that resurrection morning when we shall meet to part no more.

Your first daughter,

Dr. Nkemakola (Your Odoh)