

**Title:** Rest for the Weary

**Artist:** Gift Amarachi Ottah

**Artist Statement:**

My artwork depicts the daily reality of rural Nigerian women, whose lives are marked by endless labor from sunrise to sunset. These women traverse treacherous paths to their farms, often carrying both their harvest and their children - a toddler strapped to their back, a heavy load balanced on their head, while guiding other children along unmaintained roads through thick bush.

The artwork also shows three women sitting together, their different traditional attire representing Nigeria's diverse cultures. Though they come from different ethnic groups, their shared experiences unite them. To meet their basic survival needs, these women carry burdens and traumas that are physical, emotional and spiritual.

Yet there is hope for the many burdens these people are carrying. These burdens become bearable when we respond to Jesus' invitation in Matthew 11:28, "Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." When we bring our weariness to Christ and support one another in community, we find rest and strength to continue our journey.

**About the Artist:**

Gift Amarachi Ottah, a final-year Mass Communication student at Alex Ekwueme Federal University Ndufu-Alike in Ebonyi State, draws inspiration from her home state of Abia in Nigeria. Following her family's tradition in creative arts and printing, Gift has developed a unique artistic voice that speaks to the struggles and strength of Nigerian women. She was motivated to design this artwork for the 2026 World Day of Prayer program because of the burdens that Nigerian women are facing. She hopes that her art will help to amplify their voices.