



PHILIP DAVOU DUNG ASSUMES OFFICE AS THE SECOND BISHOP OF SHENDAM

Jan 13, 2017

SHENDAM, NIGERIA -

Most Reverend Philip Davou Dung has been ordained and installed as the Second Catholic Bishop of the Catholic diocese of Shendam. His Episcopal ordination and installation ceremony took place at the Centenary Ground of Shendam Diocese during the celebration of the Episcopal Ordination Mass presided over by Most Rev. Ignatius Kaigama, President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) and Archbishop of Jos. He succeeds the former local ordinary of the diocese, late Bishop James Daman OSA.

The principal consecrator at the ceremony was the President of the CBCN, assisted by Archbishop Augustine Akubuze of Benin and Vice president, CBCN and Bishop Oliver Doeme of Maiduguri.

The ceremony which brought together priests, religious and laity from within and outside Shendam diocese had also in attendance over 34 Bishops, the Executive Governor of Plateau State, Rt, Hon Simon Bako Lalong and his state executives as well as other dignitaries of Church, State and traditional rulers.

In his homily at the ceremony Archbishop Mathew Man'Oso Ndagoso of Kaduna thanked the diocesan clergy and the faithful of Shendam Diocese for their support, cooperation and collaboration with the late chief shepherd and the outgoing Diocesan administrator in bringing the Diocese to where it is today. His words: "We have no reason to doubt that the same kind gesture of support, cooperation and collaboration will be extended to the new chief

shepherd so that together you can move the young diocese to greater heights.”

The Archbishop advised the new bishop to be strong and have constant recourse to God who will always see him through in the most difficult and challenging tasks of the episcopate.

He advised: “Given the incessant crises that the diocese has experienced over the years, as you start your pastoral ministry as a Bishop, you have in your hands from Pandam to Doka, from Kuka to Wase, thousands of the poor made poorer by the conflicts itching to hear the good news proclaimed to them, broken hearts waiting to be mended, captives waiting to be set free, mourners waiting to be consoled and the despondent waiting to be given hope. And it is precisely for this reason that the Good Shepherd in the Gospel of John 21:15-17 said in today’s liturgy: Feed my lambs. Look after my sheep. Feed my sheep. And mind you, the sheep and lamb you are to feed and look after are not necessarily catholic or even Christians. To be sure, every human being living within the confine of Shendam Diocese is your sheep and lamb.”

In his goodwill message the Charges d’Affaires of the Apostolic Nunciature in Nigeria, Monsignor Javier D. Fernandez G congratulated the diocese of Shendam for their loyalty, constancy and veneration of the Holy Father which they have manifested in allowing the solemn ceremony of the installation. While congratulating Fr Raymond Gofut for his pastoral dedication during his tenure as Diocesan Administrator, he admonished the new bishop to heed to the advice of the Holy Father to Bishops to ‘be pastors close to people, pastors who are neighbours’ and servants...’

The Vice President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) Archbishop Augustine Akubuze welcomed the new bishop on behalf of the members of the conference into their fold. “Today we welcome you into the Catholic Bishops’ Conference where you rightly belong and where we hope you will bring to bear the wealth of your pastoral experience to enrich our conference;” he said.

In his response, the new Bishop thanked everyone for their presence, encouragement and gifts. He prayed God to

grant journey mercies to all as they go back. A major highlight of the ceremony was the presentation of a brand new Prado Jeep to the new bishop by the priest, religious and laity of the diocese.