



## **NCDPA REITERATES ALLEGIANCE TO BISHOPS CONFERENCE**

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### **JALINGO, NIGERIA -**

The Nigeria Catholic Diocesan Priests' Association (NCDPA) has reiterated its allegiance and obedience to the Holy Father, Pope Francis and the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN); noting that the interactive initiative between the Conference and the Priests started in 2013, has positively impacted on the relationship between the bishops and the priests and the life of the Church in the country in general.

The reconfirmation of this allegiance was contained in the address of the President of the association, Rev. Fr. Sylvester Onmoke, during the recent interactive session between the Bishops and representatives of the priests in the country in Jalingo, Taraba State.

Describing the outcome of the interactive sessions between the two bodies fruitful and edifying, the NCDPA President declared: " Since the inception of this interactive session which first took place in Otukpo in 2013, we have had a new form of collaboration; an interactive collaboration, where priests have been listened to and together with the Bishops chart a direction for particular issues that pertain to priestly life and ministry." He added: "It has heightened confident support for priests with bishops and

weakened the embers of distrust in our mutual collaborative efforts. It has helped to strengthen priestly fraternity and unity in the Church in Nigeria.”

Outlining the policies put in place by the association to affirm the sacredness of priestly cooperation and collaboration with the Bishops, Fr. Onmoke stated that the utmost administrative commitment and goal of the body is “to collaborate with the Bishops towards sustaining the unity of priests with bishops in the Church in Nigeria; and maintain a harmonious and cordial working relationship with our Bishops in whose priesthood we share remains the uppermost administrative plan of the association.

Fr. Onmoke intimated the Bishops about the efforts of the association in helping to resolve the Ahiara Diocese issue pointing out that the issue “has become a metaphor for dissention and non-conformity and this has given us some pain. The NCDPA President added that the association has critically discussed the issue of divisiveness and dissention within the Church stressing: “This issues gravely bother us, just like they are concern for our Bishops.”

The president concluded: “Our mission as an association remains to promote priestly fraternity and unity and never flex muscles with the Church hierarchy or the Holy Spirit”.