



BISHOP CALLS FOR COLLABORATION ON REHABILITATION OF VICTIMS OF BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY

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MAIDUGURI, NIGERIA -

Catholic Bishop of Maiduguri Diocese, Most Rev. Oliver Dashe Doeme has called for an all stakeholders synergy on the rehabilitation programme for the victims of the Boko Haram insurgency in the Northeast region of the country. Bishop Doeme made this call during a recent chat with media men in Bazza village in Michika Local Government Area of Adamawa State. The Bishop accompanied by four Bishops of the Catholic Church were in Bazza for the erection of a giant Cross on mount Bazza as part of the diocese's ceremony for the re-consecration of the diocese to the Immaculate heart of Mary.

According to the bishop, the Cross, which is the biggest of such structure in the country, symbolizes the victory of Christ over Satan and is to provide consolation for the people who are traumatized, devastated and in pain. He added: "When we come to the cross and venerate it, we are asking Jesus to help us surmount our problems and challenges that we face as pilgrims towards the God's kingdom".

Bishop Doeme informed the congregation present at the ceremony that the Cross, constructed by a Nigerian engineer, Mrs. Christiana Victor Madugu, was sponsored by a group of spirited individuals in London, who wanted to contribute their quota to the propagation of Christianity in the country.

Speaking on the return of normalcy to the region, Bishop Doeme commended the efforts of the Federal Government and the armed forces at driving out the insurgents and restoring civil authority in the region. He however noted that for the rehabilitation programme of the government to be very successful, there is need for the involvement of other stakeholders, especially the Church in the

exercise. His words: "I want to urge government agencies involved in the north east to partner with the Church in the resettlement process; we are closer to the people as we are on ground with the people."

The ceremony was attended by: Bishops Ayo Maria of Ilorin, Dami Mamza of Yola; Peter Okpaleke of Ahiara and Michael Gokum of Pankshin; as well as priests Religious, lay faithful and dignitaries from

all walks of life. Other activities of the programme included: the handing over of a health Centre donated to the Church by Andrew Robert and the inauguration of the rehabilitated Minor Seminary at Shuwa, destroyed by the insurgents.