



HUMILITY AN ESSENTIAL VIRTUE FOR ALL FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST

Nov 08, 2017

GARKI, NIGERIA -

Humility has been described as an essential virtue necessary for the realization of the missionary mandate of Christ by all the faithful saddled with the responsibility of reaching out with the Good news of Salvation. In the same vein, priests and leaders of the people have been warned to avoid the wrath of God by leading their followers astray through pride and arrogance. This assertion was posited by the Secretary General of the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN); Rev. Fr. Ralph Madu during his homily at the celebration of the Mass at Saint Gabriel Chaplaincy, (CSN), Garki, last Sunday.

Fr. Madu who used the readings of the Mass to alert the congregation on how to avert the anger of God by avoiding the ways of the Scribes and Pharisees as contained in the first reading from the Book of Malachi; noted that Christ warned the leaders, especially the priests not to lead the people astray by their pride, wayward living, arrogance and overburdening on the people.

According to the homilist, the priest of the days of Malachi “were indifferent to their rituals and their teaching responsibilities and were often unfair in the judgments they made about people”; and through Malachi, God caused the priests who were leading the people astray. He continued; “... the Lord God emphatically condemns the Temple priests for not teaching His messages and not carrying out His commands.”

Pointing out that the attitude of those days still persists in some clerics and leaders of today, Fr. Madu remarked: “Sad to say, many modern clerics of all denominations have a lot in common with the clerics of Malachi’s day. He added: “No wonder so many of our faithful go ‘outside the system’ we’ve created in order to discover Who God really IS and what He really wants of them.”

Fr Madu condemned in its entirety religious prostitution by faithful who abandon the true way of Christ, the Catholic Church and jump from one religion denomination to another, in search of miracles, power and cure and making idols of priests and pastors; abandoning true Christian life as directed by Jesus Christ the Saviour.

According to him: “When priests do not properly do their God-given ministry of teaching, they cause many to falter by their instructions.” He added: “Ministers of God should preach sound doctrine, and live holy lives according to the Scripture for the conversion of sinners and salvation of their souls too.”

Reminding the congregation that every faithful is a priest by virtue of Baptism, Fr. Madu noted that St Paul in the second reading (*1 Thessalonians 2:7b-9,13*), demonstrated that mildness and tenderness are necessary for the mission of evangelization. His words: “We should not only be faithful to our calling as Christians, but also, we should be careful not to be a burden unto the people of God entrusted in our care.”

Speaking on the Gospel reading, Fr. Madu outlined the encounter between Christ and the Scribes and Pharisees with particular regards to their rejecting him as the Messiah and the causes he rained on them. The CSN Secretary General went on to outline the sins of the Scribes and Pharisees to include not practicing what they preach; overburdening the ordinary people and their hypocrisy of doing everything they do to be seen by others.

Fr. Madu in his conclusion noted the lessons of the readings to include: “the need to become servant leaders in a serving community; the need to live the faith we profess, the need to learn to the art of self-criticism and the need to accept the responsibilities which go with our titles’.