



## **HOLISTIC EDUCATION ESSENTIAL FOR FUTURE LEADERS OF THE COUNTRY - Archbishop Akubeze**

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### **ABUJA, NIGERIA -**

The Catholic Archbishop of Benin City and Vice President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), Most. Rev. Augustine Akubeze has advocated a holistic education formation by the Veritas University and other Catholic institutions in the country, noting that the formation of future leaders of the country must be premised on a “mentality that only the truth sets a people free”.

Archbishop Akubeze made this assertion in his address at the opening ceremony of the 10th anniversary National Conference of Veritas University, Abuja. The ceremony took place recently at Chelsea Hotel, Central Business district, Abuja. The CBCN Vice President who also brought the felicitation of the President of the Conference, Archbishop Ignatius Kaigama, who was unavoidably absent at the ceremony; expressed the joy of the Bishops’ Conference at the gradual growth of the institution which was established to provide a holistic education for the young people of the country.

Pointing out that the name of the university - Veritas - connotes the truth; Archbishop Akubeze stressed that the search for the truth should be the “pursuit of every Catholic University and in fact, every education institution.” According to him: “the dream of the CBCN and the aspirations of many Catholics who have been supporting this institution and the yearnings of many students and aspiring students to Veritas University must always be the search

for truth.” He added: “The present age is in urgent need of this kind of disinterested service, namely of proclaiming the meaning of truth, that fundamental value without which freedom, justice and human dignity are extinguished.”

While stating that the desire of the Bishops who are the owners of Veritas is to make it the best educational institution and role model in the country and one of the best in the world; the CBCN Vice President, commended the Vice chancellor, lecturers and other staff of the institution challenging them not to relent in their efforts until the utmost desire of the Bishops is realized.

He declared: “As you know, education is not just about academic certificate. It also involves human formation. It involves character formation. In the process of your education in this Institution, I want to encourage you the staff to help the students to have a wider horizon of life. Develop in them the capacity to accept diversity of cultures. Instil in the students, the willingness to contribute to the common good.”

The Archbishop continued: “This value of contributing to the common good is something that is lacking in our society. Corruption will be eradicated if the students begin to learn that only money that accrues to a person as a result of hard work can be enjoyed. Some of the students of Veritas University are going to be Senators, House of Representatives Members, Governors, Local Government Chairmen and may be president of the country in the future. The leaders of our future must be formed with a mentality that only the truth sets a people free.

Speaking on the theme of the conference being organized by the university to celebrate her 10th anniversary, premised on peace and national development; Archbishop Akubeze described it as very apt; noting that “the country is recently faced with agitations for secession, hate speeches, insurgency and terrorism, herders and farmers, kidnappings and armed robbery, civil disturbances, ethnic and religious tensions and so on”.

He added: “These can result in disunity, instability, and if not curtailed, disintegration. Justice and peace must always be together. Any society that wants development must seek justice and peace.” While congratulating the university

for the successes achieved so far, Archbishop Akubeze urged the university community to strive further to make the institution the “reference point university that meets the requirement of holistic education which entails human, intellectual, and religious formation”.