



FUNERAL MASS PROVIDES OPPORTUNITY FOR RENEWAL OF FAITH IN CHRIST

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KADUNA, NIGERIA -

Funeral rites for the dead provide an opportunity for the renewal of our faith in Jesus Christ and remind us of the need to be closer to God and seek his mercy and compassion. This was the kernel of the homily of Rev. Fr. Julius Bonart, while preaching at the funeral Mass for late Mr. Damian Yakubu Waziri, the Immigration/Protocol Officer of the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN), who died in Abuja, recently, after a brief illness.

The ceremony which took place at St Joseph Catholic, Fadan Ikulu, Kaduna State; the home town of the deceased was attended by a large crowd including a delegation of the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN), led by Rev. Fr. Ojaje Idoko, CSN Director of Pastoral Affairs. Rev. Fr. Julius Bonat, the parish priest of St Joseph's Catholic Church, Fadan Ikulu, Kaduna Archdiocese; was the chief celebrant at the Mass. He was assisted by: Rev. Frs. Ojaje Idoko, Uche Obodoechina and Joseph Offor of the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria; and three other priests of Kaduna Archdiocese.

According to the homilist: Funeral Mass is not for the deceased but for Christ who died for the deceased and all of

us; in thanksgiving to God for His endless mercy. He urged the faithful present to always pray for God's mercy and always focus on Him for His love and compassion. He added that funeral rites awaken us to renew our faith in Jesus Christ, and the need for us to live a good life serving God in humanity.

He described the deceased as a gentle and loving person who has served his community and Church to the best of his ability with all he had; adding that the crowd of sympathizers at his burial is a testimony of the good life he lived.

Speaking on behalf of the Secretary General of the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, Rev. Fr. Ralph Madu; the head of the CSN delegation delivered the condolence messages of the Catholic Bishops of the country as well as that of the directors, management and staff of all the agencies owned by the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN).

Commiserating with the family, Fr. Idoko described the late Damian Yakubu Waziri as a peaceful, dedicated and committed worker of the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria who related very well with his colleagues and those he had official dealings with. Noting that the deceased spent most of his working life at the secretariat, the CSN director stated that in the course of his official duty, late Yakubu Waziri had business transactions with most of the bishops, priests and religious of the country, in the handling of their travelling documents.

Fr. Idoko described the deceased as a diligent and astute worker who was always very punctual at work and all

other activities of the secretariat including daily Mass attendance. He added that the late Yakubu Waziri, who died on active service will be greatly missed by the CSN Family and prayed that God will grant the wife, children and family the fortitude to bear the loss.

Also present at the funeral ceremony were: Rev. Fr. Uche Obodoechina, Deputy Executive Secretary, Catholic Caritas Foundation of Nigeria (CCFN); Rev. Fr. Joseph Offor, the Executive Secretary, National Catholic Service Centre (NCSC); Rev. Sr. Bernadine Ikeji, CSN Personnel Manager and a 30-man lay staff delegation of the CSN/CBCN Agencies, led by the Sir Godwin Ukel, CSN/CBCN Agencies Financial Analyst/Internal Auditor and Chairman of the Lay Staff Association and Mr. Joseph Falase, CBCN Lay Staff Episcopal Committee Secretary.