



MEDIA PROFESSIONALS ADVISED ON HOW TO ERADICATE FALSEHOOD

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ELELE, NIGERIA -

Communication professionals have been called upon to adopt this year's World Communications Day message of Pope Francis as the roadmap for eradicating falsehood and misinformation in the society.

The call was contained in the Resolutions adopted by delegates present at Signis Nigeria Second National Delegates Assembly, held recently at the JCT Guest House of the National Pilgrimage and Eucharistic Adoration Centre, Elele, near Port Harcourt, Rivers State. The theme for the Assembly was: Communication for the Promotion of Justice, peace and Reconciliation in Nigeria.

The assembly started with the celebration of the Mass, also featured: visit to the Museum of Charms and Fetish Objects at the National Pilgrimage Centre and election of new officers to direct the affairs of the association for the next four years. The theme for the gathering was: Communication for the Promotion of Justice, Peace and Reconciliation in Nigeria. It was attended by about 60 delegates and observer-members, from all the nine Ecclesiastical Provinces of the Church in the country.

The Resolutions which was titled: "Communication as A Catalyst for the Promotion of Peace and Reconciliation in Nigeria, also called on the nation's politicians to eschew hate speech and the use of youths for activities inimical to

national security. It was signed by Very Rev. Fr. Patrick Alumuku and Mr. Anthony Agbugba, President and Secretary of the association, respectively.

Stressing the need to move Signis Nigeria to the next level in a more proactive manner, delegates at the assembly called on Catholics in communication apostolate to take seriously Pope Francis' 2018 World Communications Day message in which he challenged all "to discern and embrace everything that encourages peace, justice and reconciliation and also confront those things that tend to isolate, divide and destroy".

While advocating that Signis should be seen as a role model for building collaborative communication apostolate, the delegates called on all stakeholders in the media industry, especially professionals; to serve as gatekeepers to citizen-journalism as a means of eradicating hate speech and fake news.

Speaking on the state of the nation, the delegates expressed concern on the situation of security of life and property as well as the approach of the Federal Government in addressing the issue of corruption in the country's public service.

The delegates remarked: "We laud government's efforts in the fight against corruption as well as ensuring the security of lives and property. However, the seeming selective approach to the fight against graft puts a question mark on its success. In like manner, while we thank God for the safe return of the Dapchi Schoolgirls, we call on the government to do the needful by ensuring the release of Leah Sharibu towards reuniting her with her parents."

Expressing concern over the Mbalom massacre of two priests and 17 other Catholic faithful in Benue State and the recent attack on the Sacred Heart Minor Seminary in Jalingo, Taraba State, by Fulani herdsmen, the delegates noted that these further show "the calamitous nature of security of lives and property in our country". They therefore called on the government to move from "mere rhetoric to concrete action in restoring peace and order so as to avert spate of violence across the country".

