



INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION KEY FACTOR FOR PROMOTION OF PEACE

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ELELE, NIGERIA -

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), Episcopal Chairman for Social Communications; Most Rev. Denis Isizoh has described inter-personal communication as a necessary factor for the promotion of peace, Justice and Reconciliation in Nigeria.

The bishop's call was contained in his message to the delegates at Signis Nigeria Second National Delegates Assembly, held recently at 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.

Describing the theme of the assembly as very apt and timely, especially now that the country is at a crossroad; Bishop Isizoh outlined the challenges facing Nigeria, noting that effective and proactive communication might be the necessary antidote. He declared: "Perhaps, what is needed to bridge the gap of division and heal the wound of mutual suspicions among individuals and ethnic groups in the country is to improve in our interpersonal communications."

Raising several questions on the level of interpersonal communications between the various arms of government

and the various stakeholder groups in the country, Bishop Isizoh stressed the importance of Journalism for Peace which he described as “a brand of journalism that promotes the common good; that seeks the truth and is balanced and objective”. He explained that the onus now is “a renewed interest in a free, professional and plural media in contributing to good governance and the promotion of peace”.

Calling on the delegates at the three-day assembly to deliberate and come out with practical initiatives that could help the realization of the objectives of the theme of the congress, the CBCN Communications Directorate Episcopal Chairman said: “Do not ignore the power that the mass media (print, radio and TV) and more recently the social media has, to reach people at scale, particularly the poorest, or the diversity of ways of communicating with people through this media, can bring them the essential value of the good news of peace.”

Stressing the need for a vibrant media which gives people free flowing access to information, enables dialogue, encourages freedom of expression and promotes greater political participation and accountability, Bishop Isizoh urged Catholic professionals to constantly improve their technical, editorial and management skills to produce trustworthy and encouraging programming that will help reduce all forms of violence and encourage government based on the rule of law and upholds justice and human rights.