



CALL TO EPISCOPATE RENEWAL OF GOD'S GRACE ON HUMANITY

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ILORIN, NIGERIA -

The call to the Episcopate is a renewal of God's grace not only on the newly ordained bishop but also on the world, thereby increasing the number of those to be saved; the Catholic Bishop of Osogbo Diocese, Most Rev. John Oyejola has declared. The bishop made this assertion in his homily at the Episcopal ordination Mass of Msgr. Paul Adegboyega Olawore as the Co-Adjutor Bishop of Ilorin Diocese.

The ceremony took place recently at St Joseph's Catholic Cathedral Church, Taiwo Isale, Ilorin, Kwara State; and was attended by the Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Antonio Guido Filipazzi, John Cardinal Onaiyekan of Abuja Archdiocese; Anthony Cardinal Okogie, emeritus Archbishop of Lagos and 22 other members of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN). Also in attendance were dignitaries from all walks of life, Priests, religious, Knights of the Church and lay faithful from different parts of the country.

Describing the Episcopate as a special call to duty as shepherd of Christ's flock, the Local Ordinary of Osogbo Diocese declared: "The joy of today is not of the Church alone but of the whole human race. When the Lord chooses a minister among us mortals, he pours out his graces and blessings upon the world anew and increases the number of those who will be saved."

While calling on the Bishop-elect to accept his call to the Episcopate with gratitude and humility, the homilist urged him not to be overwhelmed by the demands of the office but depend completely on the grace of God. Noting that the ministry of a priest involves him in the inner broken life of humanity, making him to spend his whole life bearing the spiritual survival of the faithful to reach heaven, Bishop Oyejola added that as a bishop, Msgr. Olawore will discover “how even deeper and festering the wound of humanity is and how urgently your brothers and sisters stand in need of redemption”.

Outlining the apostolate of the episcopate, Bishop Oyejola urged the Bishop-elect to always pray for the grace to be a patient and compassionate healer especially of his brother-priests; who being pilgrims will need him as a father. He added that the new bishop is being consecrated to make him become “a courageous servant deeply involved in service that will bring peace, relief and consolation to our fragile and broken humanity”.

The homilist stated further that the apostolic mandate of the new bishop include preserving the Gospel of Christ from corruption and tirelessly using every means at his disposal to ensure that it is proclaimed without corruption in any form. He added: “Even though you are now called to the exalted office of a shepherd, do not lose sight of your mission and your identity as a disciple of Christ and a son of the Church and so draw more from divine wisdom and treasury of the deposit of faith through prayer, study and meditation to make yourself a wise pastor.”