



ARCHBISHOP MARTINS CHIDES NIGERIAN POLITICIANS; URGES MEDIA PRACTITIONERS TO BE MORE PROACTIVE

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LAGOS, NIGERIA -

The Catholic Archbishop of Lagos, Most Rev. Alfred Adewale Martins has called on the country's media practitioners to be more proactive and resolute in the discharge of their duties, to make Nigeria an egalitarian nation where justice, equity and rule of law are held sacrosanct and true democracy entrenched.

The Archbishop made the call while addressing a press conference on the celebration of the 20th anniversary of his Episcopal ordination as a Bishop and the sixth year of his enthronement as the Archbishop of Lagos Archdiocese. Present at the press conference, held at the Holy Cross Cathedral Conference Hall, Lagos, were the Vicar General of the Archdiocese, Very Monsignor John Aniagwu; Monsignor Benard Okodua, Monsignor Anthony Obanla and Monsignor Gabriel Osu, the Archdiocesan Director of Communications.

Archbishop Martins also used the occasion to take a swipe at the country's politicians condemning them for turning the country to a playing ground for the achievement of selfish desires while the people who elected them continue to suffer and live in abject poverty. Noting that the country is passing through ominous and disturbing times the Archbishop declared: "The polity is continually being heated up by the political elites; they have turned the nation to their play fields and fiefdoms that should be exploited, balkanized and conquered for their selfish ends."

He continued: It is wrong for any group of individuals, under any guise to arrogate to themselves the unwarranted role of deciding who gets and does not get what in a country that belongs to all." Expressing concern that a few individuals in the name of party politics allot to themselves and their cronies the wealth and resources of the country, the Archbishop added: "The same old groups and their families keep on shifting the goal post while they leave the young, enterprising people with fresh ideas unable to get opportunities to use their experiences to impact on the nation and its people. The aftermath of this, he added is that majority of Nigerians remain impoverished, disempowered "and just floating about without dignified living conditions in a country that is blessed as ours."

Archbishop Martins identified absence of good, efficient and effective leadership as the major problem of the country and the root cause of myriads of problems facing the country. He therefore called for urgent reconfiguration of the country, pointing out that the present system of government cannot ensure justice, equity, peace, religious harmony and justifiable development in all parts of the country. He called for an authentic and fair general elections in 2019, urging all stakeholder groups, especially the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), to work very hard to give the nation an election that is credible and transparent.

Archbishop Martins urged the country's media practitioners to "remain resolute on the path of truth, unbiased and objective reportage of news and events. You must not be cowed or intimidated from doing that which is right and needful at all times, irrespective of the situation and people involved," he declared.