



BISHOP CALLS FOR COLLABORATION ACROSS RELIGIOUS BORDERS TO BUILD A GREATER NIGERIA

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KANO, NIGERIA -

The collaboration among people of different faith, to which the Catholic Church is committed, has been described as an essential factor for the building of an authentic Nigerian nation that can earn the respect of the world and bring God's favour on the country.

This assertion was made by the Catholic Bishop of Oyo Diocese, Most Rev. Emmanuel Adetoyese Badejo, in his homily at the celebration of the Mass to mark the centenary of the advent of the Catholic faith to Kano Diocese. The ceremony took place recently at Our Lady of Fatima Cathedral, Kano; and was attended by a high powered delegation of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), led by its President, Archbishop Augustine Obiora Akubeze of Benin City Archdiocese.

Noting that the collaboration that existed among the Christians, traditional and civil authorities in the area has played a major role in the facilitation of the centenary celebration of the diocese; Bishop Badejo declared: "The Catholic Church, no matter what, will continue to form God-fearing, productive citizens for this country in their thousands."

He continued: “her unrepentant policy of being present to the needs of Christians, Muslims and adherents of traditional religion alike is the only recipe for building an authentic Nigeria which can earn respect of the whole world and bring God’s favour on us all.” The Bishop added: “It all really rests on the firm belief of the church in the equal dignity of all men and women before God, the creator of all.”

Going down memory lane, on the 100 years journey of the Catholic faith in the diocese amidst challenges and tribulations, Bishop Badejo commended the missionaries who brought the faith and the early Christians, for their resilience and perseverance in sustaining the faith, noting that: “Through their determination, many lives have been transformed by the joy of the gospel”.

The homilist commended the first indigenous Bishop of the diocese, Most Rev. John Niyiring OSA, and the faithful for keeping the faith glowing and the tremendous progress made, spiritually, pastorally and in the provision of social amenities for the needs of all the people of the area, irrespective of their religious differences. He called on them not to rest on their oars, saying: “In spite of all the trials and pains of the past and the challenges of the present, all church groups and societies and even individuals must embark on the work of evangelization with courage and faith”.

He also used the occasion to appeal to the people of the country, use the forthcoming General Elections to transform the country from its present sorry state to a more vibrant and justiceable democracy. His words: “ Let us deploy our time, treasure and talent for the establishment of truth and integrity in our politics, economy and our society. He added: “let us reject violence, buying and selling of votes and other vices daily creeping up on our polity.”

Also present at the celebration were: the Apostolic Nuncio to Nigeria, Archbishop Antonio Guido Filipazzi, Archbishop Augustine Akubueze of Benin city and CBCN President and over 25 other Bishops.

