



HUMILITY AN ESSENTIAL VIRTUE FOR SUCCESSFUL VOCATION IN THE LORD'S VINEYARD

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ABUJA, NIGERIA -

Humility has been described as an essential virtue for Catholic priests, to enable them fulfil their vocation faithfully in the Lord's vineyard and lead the faithful in the right way to Christ. This assertion was made by the Catholic Archbishop of Abuja, John Cardinal Onaiyekan in his homily at the recent ordination of five new priests for Abuja Archdiocese.

The ceremony which was witnessed by many priests, religious and lay faithful from different parts of the Archdiocese; and families of the newly ordained priests, took place at the Church of the Archangels, Gaduwa, Abuja.

Cardinal Onaiyekan also used the occasion to call on Catholic Priests to remain steadfast in their vocation and avoid taking undue advantage of the faithful in their care. He reminded them that religious leaders should serve the faithful they are to lead to Christ and not exploit them.

The local ordinary of Abuja Archdiocese declared: ““We must remind them that their calling is to holiness, and sanctity of life for themselves and the people, especially the youths and children. Their mission should be to bring them nearer to God.”

Cardinal Onaiyekan urged the newly ordained priests to be focused on God to overcome temptations especially when working with young people. His words: “Keep your focus on God. You are weak but when you work with God, you become strong. Anytime you leave Him, you will fall. So live each day with the grace of God.”

Noting that the Catholic Priesthood is not a business venture or an opportunity for amassing wealth, the Cardinal told the newly ordained priests: “Beware of the temptation of money, serve the Lord not for it but the zeal and heavenly reward.” Urging them not to carry out their duties grudgingly, Cardinal Onaiyekan noted that there is joy and gladness in serving the Lord because it is crucial to the mission of their vocation.

The Catholic Archbishop of Abuja also used the occasion to speak on the growth of vocation to the priesthood pointing out that the number of priests available is not adequate for the number of the faithful in the vineyard. His words: “Generally, in the world, clerics are not enough. So, we are glad to have more people ordained to serve as religious leaders.” He added: “Every cleric is supposed to be a servant of truth and serve the people in humility. Among clerics, there are some who are focused on looking after young people”.

