



PEACE AS VEHICLE OF GLOBAL HARMONY CANNOT BE CONTROVERTED

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OWERRI, NIGERIA -

Peace, as the vehicle of global development, harmony justice, equity and human communality cannot be controverted and only possible through the collective responsibility of all peoples of the world, especially stakeholder groups, Rev. Fr. Ralph Madu, a former Secretary General at the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN) has posited.

Fr. Madu made this remark while delivering a lecture titled: *Them and Us: Avoiding Conflicts and Working for Peace*, at the installation of Rotarian Ohajunwa Chukwuemeka as the 19th President of Rotary Club of Owerri Central District 9142, Nigeria; at the Immaculate Hotels, Owerri, Imo State, recently.

Frowning at the balkanization of “Whatever has the look of oneness nature, including life itself”; The lecturer disclosed that the presentation is geared towards understanding the concept of peace and conflict to help the members of the Rotary Club “to understand and appreciate the enormity of the call God and humanity have placed in their hands and to pursue it with utmost devotion and religiosity.”

The four areas of focus addressed by Fr. Madu were: concepts of peace and conflict; a cursory gaze at the crisis level of Nigeria; Rotary International as a veritable agent of peace and an overview of the role of Rotary Club in Nigeria.

Describing the word peace as a concept and a condition that has remained one of the most expensive things in the world right from the creation man, the lecturer went down the memory lane of history to outline how peace has been elusive in the world as a result of some scrupulous and self-conceited actions, greed and ambition of man, pointing out that: "In all the various myths and legends about the origin of war and conflicts in the world, the common denominator has always been because man went against an instruction given to him for his own good."

He added: "Ironically, the history of humankind has never been the story of peace but the story of wars. Of the 3,400 years of recorded human history, 3,166 were years of war and the remaining 234 were years of preparation for war (Buetow 2002). Fr. Madu spoke extensively on the importance and necessity of peace in all facets of life for development in the world, in the family, community, associations and the society at large, pointing out that, this however demands the cooperative and collaboration of all, irrespective of differences.

Using the position of the Church to buttress his point on the importance of peace for communal and societal harmony, the former CSN Secretary General noted that the Church emphasizes peace as being inseparable from justice. His words: "For her, true peace is not merely the absence of war or the fragile exhaustion that exists in the

aftermath of conflict, when lives have been torn apart, relationships broken, infrastructures destroyed, and homes demolished. Rather, the God-given peace that our creator desires for us and to which life simply calls us, is built on justice, where everything and everyone in the created order is in right relationship with each other and can reach their God-given potential (Shilson-Thomas 2013).”

He continued: “The catechism of the Catholic Church laid more emphasis on the same issue in these words: “Respect for and development of human life require peace. Peace is not merely the absence of war, and it is not limited to maintaining a balance of powers between adversaries. Peace cannot be attained on earth without safeguarding the goods of persons, free communication among men, respect for the dignity of persons and peoples, and the assiduous practice of fraternity. Peace is the tranquillity of order. Peace is the work of justice and the effect of charity.”