



CHALLENGE OF LEADERSHIP PROBLEM NOT LIMITED TO THE POLITICAL CLASS - Bishop Arogundade

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IBADAN, NIGERIA -

The challenge of leadership problem is not limited to the political sphere of the country; the Catholic Bishop of Ondo Diocese, Most Rev. Jude Arogundade has declared. The Bishop made the assertion in his homily at the 70th Birthday Thanksgiving Mass of the Catholic Archbishop of Ibadan, Most Rev. Gabriel 'Leke Abegunrin.

The ceremony which took place recently at the Church of the Ascension, Bodija, Ibadan, Oyo State; was attended by a powerful delegation of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), led by its President, Most Rev. Augustine Obiora Akubeze; dignitaries from all walks of life from different parts of the country; traditional rulers; priests, religious, Knights of the Church and lay faithful from the Ecclesiastical Province of Ibadan.

According to Bishop Arogundade: "It is a generally accepted fact that Nigeria's problem is that of leadership. This does not exclude the Church leadership. The complex realities of our nation have led to an unprecedented competition for dominance and control, and outright adoption of policies that prey on the law abiding citizens and the

vulnerable.” Regretting that there is a general atmosphere of apathy and disaffection in the country, Bishop Arogundade declared: “Our national conscience has been so weakened as result of long years of adopting policies that take law abiding and patriotic citizens for granted. We are a country that will pay terrorists and bandits billions of Naira, but will not pay law abiding and patriotic workers their salaries”.

He continued: “It is understandable when the people, and sometimes the civil authority look up to religious leaders for leadership. Is it not the case that the moral voice needed for a change of attitude and to move our country in the direction of growth and civility is missing from our national equation? There seems not to be a single voice capable of summoning our nation around shared values and common purpose any more. What we have at the moment are tribal and regional heroes whose acceptance and scopes of influence do not cut across the entire nation. As our political views and positions continue to differ under key players on national issues, they further widen the gap of our unity”.

The Local Ordinary of Ondo Diocese then emphasized that what the people need are leaders “who will help them out of the belief system that glorifies myth and the thinking that there are some kinds of spiritual solution to our problems without our change of behaviour. We cannot continue to do the same thing and expect a different result.”

While congratulating the celebrant for his sterling leadership qualities as the Spiritual Father of the Catholic flock in the Archdiocese of Ibadan and the Ecclesiastical Province; the homilist noted that the celebrant has two cultures of identical worldview to draw on. His words: “We appeal to you to continue to lead us in the love that draws meaning from the sacrifices of Jesus Christ. The type of sacrifice that takes extra courage to offer. A sacrifice that demands the best from you, because our youths are looking for role models who will lead them away from the culture of exploitation, self-indulgence and greed that have spread across the country.

Bishop Arogundade added that the Yoruba culture is very receptive to Christian values and truth. He stated that “Christianity helps to fulfil our most cherished values, and emphasize that the supreme quality of leadership is

unquestionable integrity". He added: "What most people need to learn in life is how to love people and use things, instead of using people and loving things."