



CHRISTIANITY PREMISED ON PROSPERITY NOT THE CONCEPT OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

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ABUJA, NIGERIA -

Christianity premised on prosperity and desire for the mundane things of the world are not in conformity with the teachings and concept of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Catholic Bishop of Kano, Most Rev. John Niyiring OSA, has declared. The bishop made this observation in his homily at the celebration of the opening Mass for the workshop organized for the Leadership of the Laity groups of the Church, recently in Abuja, by the Department of Pastoral Agents, Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN).

The ceremony which was attended by about 87 leaders of the various laity groups of the Church from all the nine Ecclesiastical Provinces in the country, took place at the CSN Resource Centre, Durumi, Abuja.

Bishop Niyiring who is the Episcopal Chairman of the CBCN Laity Committee expressed concern on the emphasis on the Gospel of prosperity by leaders of contemporary Christian Churches, pointing out that this was not the primary mission of the Church of Christ. Urging the participants to engage in self-examination of conscience on their relationship with fellow human beings, Bishop Niyiring stated that "If our Christianity is only premised on the basis of what we get from God, then we have missed the essence of Christianity and salvation.

The Bishop reiterated the need for all to make a conscious decision on whether or not we want to follow Jesus and

when we do chose to follow Him, we must be ready and willing to carry our crosses. According to him, in all decisions of following Jesus, the essence is the love of God and neighbour; adding that we all must be Christ-like in our attitudes to merit the name of Christian. He enjoined all to endeavor to live a true Catholic Christian life irrespective of the various challenges faced.

In his keynote address at the opening ceremony of the workshop, Bishop Niyiring enjoined the participants to endeavor to foster unity in diversity, adding that by virtue of their Baptism, they are all individually and collectively agents of pastoral care.

In the communiqué issued at the end of the workshop, the participants agreed among other things that: there is need for the laity to promote peace and love within and outside the church; that the laity should be properly equipped with information regarding their roles and responsibilities in the Church; that the workshop was organized to clear all the grey areas of our Christian lives and support for the one-term tenure endorsed by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN); for executives of all laity groups.

Also, the participants agreed that desire for leadership positions for Church groups should be sought with the desire to serve and not for personal gains; that lay faithful must eschew all activities and actions that will bring about rancor or disunity in the church; that all lay faithful should embrace the true life of Christianity in all ramifications; support their Chaplains and the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN); acknowledge the CSN as the symbol of unity of the Bishops Conference as it coordinates the activities of the Church in the country as well as embrace their responsibilities as Christian in the family, the Church and the society.