



MAKE 2020 YEAR OF MISSION IN THE SERVICE OF THE CHURCH FOR COMMON GOOD

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ABUJA, NIGERIA -

Workers of the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN) and other agencies of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) have been admonished to make the year 2020 one of mission, working for the common good of humanity as agents of the Church in the service of Christ. The admonition was by the Catholic Bishop of Nsukka Diocese, Most Rev. Godfrey Onah, in his intervention while facilitating the 2020 Annual Retreat for the staff of CSN and other agencies of the CBCN.

Reflecting on the Theme: The Story of the Maggi: Walking in the Footsteps of the Magi; Bishop Onah gave the over 300 workers from all parts of the country three pillars on which to stand for effective discharge of their services as workers of the Church, following the footsteps of the Maggi who came in search, found and encountered the child Jesus on Epiphany. These pillars are: search for Christ and find him; encounter him with sincerity of heart and purpose and thirdly, there is always a positive result when we find Christ, premised on sincerity.

According to the retreat facilitator, the workers of the Bishops' Conference agencies, by virtue of their work have become one family because, they pray together and do much in common for the sake of the Church and humanity; despite coming from different homes, dioceses and backgrounds. Urging them to walk in the footsteps of the Maggi, Bishop Onah remarked that the workers must search for Christ, encounter him with all sincerity heart; and listening

to him committedly, they are bound to receive positive response.

He urged them not to be Christians of the Bible as the Word of God is not a book neither is it by writings alone. He stated that the Word of God came to be through creation; became words through the Prophets and the Word became flesh with the coming of Christ in the human flesh. He declared: "Let us look beyond the book - the Bible; as most faithful don't even have reference for the Word of God as contained in the Bible".

While advising the workers to participate actively in the retreat by eschewing distractions, Bishop Onah reminded them that retreat is a guide to spirituality of life and a type of withdrawal to prepare them for their future actions, spiritually and pastorally; as missionaries of the Church in the work of evangelization for humanity; especially in Nigeria. He continued: "Use the opportunity to review your activities at CSN in conjunction with your God."

The retreat master continued: "The Word of God tells you something new each time. God always gives a sign, no matter who you are or what you are. Our times are different. In the past, God spoke to our fathers in fragmentary ways, through the prophets. Today, by looking for miracles, we don't see the miracle God is doing in our lives everyday. Christianity of convenience is what we are practising today."

Bishop Onah reminded them that following Christ without challenges is impossible as he also experienced challenges while alive. "What you need is direction and collaboration with others in the course of your work in the service of the Church and mankind," he advised. Also present at the retreat were workers of the Catholic Caritas Foundation (CCFN); Veritas Travels Ltd; National Catholic Service Centre (NCSC) Salus Trust Ltd, Opus Securitatis, Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS) and Catholic Secretariat Investments Concepts Ltd (CICL).