



THE WORD OF GOD; OUR SHIELD AND HOPE IN TIMES OF TRIBULATIONS

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ABUJA, NIGERIA -

The impact of the Word of God as shield, guide and hope in times of tribulations and challenges cannot be controverted, the Bishops of the Catholic Church in Nigeria have observed. The Bishops therefore called on all Catholics, Christians and all Nigerians to keep their hope in the Word of God, especially this time that the country is facing security, religious and socio-economic challenges.

The Bishops' admonition was contained in the communique issued at the end of their first Plenary Meeting held early this month, at the CSN Resource Centre, Durumi, Abuja. In the communique, signed by Most Rev. Augustine Obiora Akubeze, Archbishop of Benin City and Most Rev. Camillus Raymond Umoh of Ikot-Ekpene; President and Secretary of the Conference respectively; the Bishops stressed: "In Psalm 119;105; we are given a beautiful promise and an eternal truth that God's Word will continue to be a gleaming lamp that will guide our feet in our journey through the darkness of this broken world."

Urging Nigerians to remain loyal to the Word of God in the present circumstances of the Nigerian nation, the Bishops added: "This promise holds true in good times but has even a greater force in challenging times." The communique also contained the position of the Bishops on: the need to hold fast to the Word of God in difficult times; the Word of God and the sanctity of human life in the Nigerian nation; and the Word of God and the care of the earth.

The Bishops also reviewed the progress and other activities of the Church in the country, since their last meeting in Abeokuta in September last year and the state of the nation and called on the faithful to use the Lent as a season to rediscover God's Word as the wellspring of constant renewal. They concluded: "The Lord in his Word invites us Christians to be people of hope amidst the vicissitudes and vagaries of life, especially in these trying times."

They added: "Hope indeed encourages us to work for the future we envisage. In this ambience of creative hope, we hold on to the Christian principle of loving even the enemies and extending this love beyond confines of ethnic and sectional leanings."