



CORONA VIRUS PANDEMIC NOT A PUNISHMENT FROM GOD - Archbishop Akubeze

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BENIN CITY, NIGERIA -

The President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) and Archbishop of Benin City, Most Rev. Augustine Obiora Akubeze has described as unfounded the news making the round that the Corona Virus pandemic that is presently ravaging the world is a punishment from God.

Archbishop Akubeze made this assertion in his homily at the celebration of the Mass at; St. Peter Catholic Church, Benin City, Edo State to mark this year's Divine Mercy Sunday. According to the Archbishop, God does not punish us for our sins, because he is merciful and compassionate.

His words: "We have heard in many quarters, that the present health crisis is a punishment from God for the sins of humanity. Many have come out to say that God is punishing us for our offenses against Him. Some have even come out to say that the Corona Virus is like the flood in Noah's time; it has come to purify the earth of evil. My dear people of God we must not listen to such hasty conclusions. God will never kill his own creatures. God does not punish us

according to our sins. In fact, we punish ourselves and we kill ourselves by the way we live and act. Every human action has its attendant consequences. So do not blame it on God.”

Expatriating on God’s infinite mercy for humanity, The CBCN President declared: “God’s response to sin is mercy. God’s answer to sin is not revenge, it is not rebuke; it is mercy. In several passages of the Old Testament, we read of the destruction of a people, because of their sins. But with the death and resurrection of Christ, God’s mercy is now more visibly manifested to us. That Mercy is what Easter is all about. It is the mercy of God that made him suffer and die for us to open the way to salvation. God’s antidote to death is love and his answer to sin is mercy. We can see that there is no end to the Mercy of God. There is no limit to God’s mercy because mercy is not an attribute in God but it is God’s Being, God’s essence, God’s Existence. He is full of Mercy.”

Urging the faithful to completely trust in God and repent for their sins, irrespective of the enormity; Archbishop Akubeze concluded: “Let us praise God who has shown us his mercy in Christ. Through Christ we gain access to the everlasting mercy of God. Let us renew our resolve to continue our corporal and spiritual works of mercy through which we all show to the world that the mercy of God endures forever.”

He added: “Never leave the presence of the Divine Mercy without receiving God’s Mercy. Never leave this sacred moment without saturating yourselves with the mercy of God. From today let all of us become God’s instrument of mercy. God’s mercy endures forever and it must be reflected in our actions.”

