



SALVATION OF HUMANITY ROOTED IN CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD - Archbishop Akubeze

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BENIN CITY, NIGERIA -

The salvation of man is rooted in Christ the Good Shepherd who out of his invaluable love for mankind suffered and died on the Cross so that humanity may attain eternal glory; the President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), and Archbishop of Benin City, Most Rev. Augustine Obiora Akubeze has declared.

The Archbishop made this affirmation in his homily at the celebration of the Mass for the fourth Sunday of Easter, held at Assumption Catholic Church, Ute, Benin City, Edo State. The CBCN President's homily was titled: Jesus The Good Shepherd Leads us to Greener Pastures.

Using the readings of the day to assert his admonition, Archbishop Akubeze stated that it is only in the name of Jesus, who is the Good Shepherd that we can be saved and be led to greener pastures. He said: "The image of God as the shepherd of his people has a long tradition in the history of God's people. This image of the shepherd which appears several times in the Old and New Testaments show us the care and concern of God for his people."

He added: "Jesus is the Good Shepherd who cares for us. He is the Shepherd who protects and provides for our needs. He is the Shepherd who does not lead us astray. He is the shepherd who forgives. He is the Shepherd who overcame sin and death in order to give us life. He is the Shepherd who protects and delivers us from evil. He is the

shepherd who heals us when we are sick. He is the shepherd who will lead us out of the shadows of the darkness of Covid-19.”

Urging the faithful to remain positive and trust Christ the Good Shepherd will lead the people out of the difficult times of the Corona Virus pandemic, Archbishop Akubeze stated that with total commitment and love, the people must recognize the voice of Christ and follow him. His words: “The good shepherd is prepared to die for the sheep. The good shepherd knows the sheep by name. The sheep recognizes the voice of the Good Shepherd; they trust him and follow him wherever he leads.”

He added: “The Good Shepherd acts as the gate of the Sheepfold to prevent the sheep from wandering and to protect them from any form of danger. Jesus says, He is the Good Shepherd. He gave up his life for us because of his love for us. His death was so that he could give life to his sheep. He knows us by name and he expects that when he calls, we listen to his voice.”

Earlier, in his homily at the celebration of the Mass on the third Sunday of Easter, Archbishop Akubeze reminded the faithful that God always want to accompany “us on the journey of our faith”. He therefore urged them to cooperate with God and, like the disciples, encounter Christ through penance and the breaking of the Bread. “We should open our hearts to Christ to help us overcome the challenges of the Corona Virus pandemic”, he admonished. The Mass was celebrated at St Gabriel the Archangel Church, Sapele road, Benin City.