



## **USE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN PERIOD TO ENHANCE SPIRITUALITY AND FAITH OF THE DOMESTIC CHURCH**

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### **IJEBU-ODE, NIGERIA -**

Catholics of Ijebu-Ode Diocese have been called upon to use the present movement challenges occasioned by the Corona Virus pandemic to reflect and enhance their life of spirituality and become better Christians and Catholic family. The call was made by the Bishop of the diocese, Most Rev. Francis Adesina, on the occasion of the first anniversary of his Episcopal ordination as the third Bishop of the Diocese.

Bishop Adesina was ordained and installed successor to Bishop Albert Fasina, the second local of the diocese, who retired last year on reaching the official retirement canonical aged as directed by the Universal Church. The pioneer local ordinary of the diocese was late Most Rev. Anthony Sanusi.

The bishop made the call in a broadcast message to the faithful of the diocese and expressed his gratitude for the support given to him to make his first year as the local ordinary of the diocese encouraging and promising. His words: "You have continued to show me love, support and cooperation in my episcopal ministry. If there are

experiences of pastoral and administrative renewal in the Diocese since the inception of our episcopate, it could not have been possible without your cooperation, collaboration and support.”

Bishop Adesina, while expressing concern on the aftermath effect of the Corona Virus pandemic on religious, business and social activities in the country, remarked: “The mandatory social lockdown in Ogun State is a blessing in disguise for it affords us the opportunity to become part of the solution in curbing the spread of the coronavirus in our communities.”

He added: “Lockdown at home, however, we are able to pray for the healing of those who are sick and for the protection of those who take care of them. I sincerely appreciate the efforts being made by various groups within and outside the Diocese to make my first episcopal anniversary memorable for me.” While thanking the priests for their cooperation and collaboration with him; and the Religious in the diocese for their witnessing presence and apostolate which according to him, has added vigour and warmth to every part of the diocese; Bishop Adesina also called on the laity to use the lockdown period to make the domestic Church more proactive in the practice of the faith.

His words: “In this time of COVID-19 pandemic, the domestic Church, our family, comes alive in the practice of the faith. This is time when parents are called upon to perform their priestly, prophetic and kingly duties in the family by assisting their wards to hold onto their Christian faith and values. Catholic families should not have excuses for not praying together, reading the Word of God and teaching the faith to the young ones.”

The bishop continued: "This is the time that Parents are reminded of their roles as teachers and pastors to their children. If all that your children knew about the Bible and prayer life is what you have taught them at home, how much of the Scriptures and Prayer will they really know? Many vocations to the priesthood and religious life spring up from the spirituality and catholicity of individual families."

Bishop Adesina added: "The Family remains the veritable nursery bed for vocations to the Priesthood, religious and married life. Make use of the duration of the coronavirus lockdown to strengthen social and spiritual bonding in the family. I challenge you to come out of this pandemic a better Christian/Catholic family."