



USE YOUR POWER POSITIVELY, MEDIA PRACTITIONERS TOLD

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BENIN CITY, NIGERIA -

Media practitioners have been called upon to use their professional power positively for the common good of humanity. This admonition was given by the President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN); and Catholic Archbishop of Benin City, Most Rev. Augustine Obiora Akubeze. The Archbishop made the call in his homily at the celebration of the Mass for the seventh Sunday of Easter and this year's World Communications Day, held at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church, Benin City, Edo State.

In the homily titled: *Jesus The Perfect Communicator is our Model of Prayer and Suffering*; Most Rev. Akubeze spoke extensively on the message of the Pope on the occasion of the World Communications Day entitled *That you may tell your children and grandchildren: Life becomes History*. According to the CBCN President, media practitioners carry on their shoulders a great responsibility of informing the people,

adding: “The information or stories you spread either form a people or deform the people. It depends on how you spread the news and tell the story.”

The Archbishop noted that journalists have the power to form and influence the minds of Nigerians to respond well to the needs of the society. Pointing out that media practitioners have a special mission entrusted to them, Archbishop Akubeze commended them, especially, those of the Catholic Church apostolate for the good work they are doing and urged them to work tirelessly to keep the people informed, particularly during this time of the Coronavirus pandemic.

Commenting on the Holy Father’s message, Archbishop Akubeze described it as very apt and is directed at every faithful, especially media practitioners. His words: “We are reminded once more, that as Catholics we are to explore every legitimate social means of communication to spread the Gospel message. This year our attention is drawn to the importance of story-telling in communicating the Gospel message.

The CBCN President pointed out that in the words of the Holy Father, we are admonished to tell “Stories that build up and not tear us apart; stories that help us rediscover our roots and the strength needed to move forward together. Stories that reminds us that we are all connected and that what happens to one happens to all.”

He stated that the message tells us that knowledge of God is handed down from generation to generation through stories; adding that the only way to act responsibly as good journalists is to tell true and good stories that can build up our society and not trigger rancour division and animosity. Archbishop Akubeze noted that “not all stories are good stories”. He notes that gossip and other forms of unverified information on social platforms can destroy the thread that binds us together.