



CHURCH POSITION ON RIGHTS OF GAY PEOPLE EXPLAINED

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ABUJA, NIGERIA -

The position of the Catholic Church in Nigeria in respect of same sex union and other moral vices is in consonance with that of the universal Church and in conformity with the Social Teachings of the Church, the President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria, Most Rev. Ignatius Kagama has declared.

Archbishop Kaigama who gave this explanation in his opening address to declare this year's Catholic Bishops' Conference First Plenary open in Abuja, stated: "It is a mischievous and faulty generalization to reason that because we resist same-sex 'marriage' we differ from our Pope who said: *'If a person is gay and seeks God and has goodwill, who am I to judge?'*" The Archbishop continued: "Our compassion for the weak, the marginalized and those who suffer discrimination is unwavering and uncompromising. We minister to all."

The theme of the Conference was: ***Church and State Partnership in Providing Quality Education for the Nigerian People***, and the ceremony took place last Sunday, at the Conference Hall of the Our Lady Queen of Nigeria Pro-Cathedral, Area 3, Abuja.

The Metropolitan of Jos Province further explained: "We stand for the promotion and protection of human rights which are consistent with our religious and cultural values. Legalizing same-sex 'marriage' will open the flood gates

to so many moral issues that can seriously compromise our African culture and becloud our evangelization efforts in Nigeria.”

He added: “:Nigerian Catholics do not hate men and women who are of biologically gay orientation, but strongly affirm that gay unions or ‘marriages’ are simply not in conformity with our Christian theology or traditional Nigerian morality.”

The explanation of Archbishop Kaigama became necessary following the attack from some quarters on the Catholic Bishops’ Conference for commending President Goodluck Jonathan for signing the Anti-same –sex Bill into Law.

According to him: “When the CBCN sent a letter commending President Goodluck Jonathan on the stand against same-sex union or ‘marriage’, we did so to uphold the age-long biblical and traditional morality of our people that marriage has always been a union between a man and a woman. Same-sex unions or so-called ‘marriages’ are alien to us and we resist the idea but we will always extend compassion of Christ to men and women with biological orientation that is gay or lesbian and defend their rights just as we have constantly defended the rights of all persons discriminated against.”

Archbishop Kaigama therefore called on “individuals, pressure groups and governments from abroad who are very anxious to fight for the rights of gays in Nigeria” to “first help us deal with the menacing activities of terrorists who claim that it is their right to kill and destroy, and have caused so many deaths of innocent Nigerians.”

The ceremony, which was attended by President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, the Papal Nuncio to Nigeria, Most Rev. Augustine Kasujja, John Cardinal Onaiyekan and over 50 members of the conference, the Senate President, Senator David Mark, priests, religious, Knights of the Catholic Church, lay faithful and other invited dignitaries from all walks of life, took place at the hall of the Our Lady Queen of Nigeria Pro-Cathedral, Area 3, Abuja.

