



AUTHENTIC STORIES MOTIVATES HEROIC CONFRONTATION WITH CHALLENGES OF LIFE

Jun 05, 2020

OYO, NIGERIA -

The Catholic Bishop of Oyo Diocese, Most Rev. Emmanuel Adetoyese Badejo has asserted that stories told in authentic manner become the motivation that enables humanity to heroically confront the challenges of life. The Bishop's contention was contained in his homily delivered at the celebration of the Mass to mark this year's World Communications Day and the seventh Sunday of Easter.

In the homily titled: *The Pain Strengthens the Promise*, Bishop Badejo elaborated on the theme of the Holy Father's message, *That you may tell your children and grandchildren (Exodus 10:2), Life becomes History*. He pointed out that the Pope's message centres on the importance and texture of storytelling in the life of the society, the local ordinary of Oyo Diocese stated that Pope Francis message challenges humanity so infected today with tragedies and bad news, to transform into "a narrative that can regard our world

and its happenings with a tender gaze".

The Bishop noted that the Holy Father recognizes how indispensable stories are to human existence; adding that "told in an authentic manner, stories then become the reason, the motivation, and the palliative that helps us to heroically confront the challenges of life. The Bishop went further to state that this aspect of life is very real to African cultures, as it was with the Jews as contained in the Old Testament of the Bible.

According to the local ordinary of Oyo Diocese, the Pope's choice of theme equips people all over the world with the tool to face the present challenges that are facing humanity in all facets of life including the Coronavirus pandemic, terrorists' attacks, bad governance, ethnic conflicts and wars. He added that these are sources of stories that are invaluable to humanity, if told in the right perspectives and truthfully. The Bishop further stressed that "Such stories remind us of when we had much less but were much more, when we found more joy in who we were than in what we had and when humanity mattered much more than possessions".

Bishop Badejo emphasized: "This proposal of authentic storytelling strongly challenges our contemporary environment of exploitative fake news and sugar-coated falsehood which seem to be dominant all over the world. Those who manufacture baseless, destructive and sensational stories and all who mindlessly disseminate them should pay

good attention.” He added: “The Pope consequently assures us: “but whereas the stories employed for exploitation and power have a short life span, a good story can transcend the confines of space and time. Centuries later, it remains timely, for it nourishes.”

The Bishop stated further “In short, the Holy Father says we need stories that reveal who we truly are, also in the untold heroism of everyday life”; along with “our oral, cultural and traditional history as well as contemporary events.” Pointing out that the Pope’s clarion call is not only for professionals but all Christians, Bishop Badejo admonished: “. “Be ready at all times to give witness for what you believe. It is within the power of every youth and adult in the Diocese and all over the world.”

Urging the faithful to speak the truth always in their stories, Bishop Badejo emphasized that as Christian communicators, we are obliged to make the people see that “there is always a larger story with God which, try as we may, we or even the smartest experts, cannot immediately fully comprehend”. He added that to effectively discharge this apostolate effectively, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is very paramount along with “the love of God who writes within us”.