



BISHOP KUKAH ADVOCATES RECOGNITION OF GIFTS IN WOMEN FOR COMMON GOOD

Jul 08, 2020

SOKOTO, NIGERIA -

Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah of Sokoto Diocese has admonished Christians to be ready to carry their crosses in order to be sincere followers of Christ. The Bishop made the call in his homily at the celebration of the Mass for the 13th Sunday in Ordinary time of the Church Year, 2020. He also outlined what exactly carrying the cross in the present-day world entails. Speaking on the theme: *Carrying the Cross*; Bishop Kukah spoke extensively on the discrimination against the girl child as against the consideration of the boy child as an invaluable gift from God. Noting that every gift of God is a treasure, the bishop condemned in strong terms the general apathy to the gift of women and the general discrimination against them in the society. Expressing concern over the culture of preference of the male child to the female, Bishop Kukah used several narratives of life to affirm the situation, noting that the African culture in this perspective is not different from the Jewish culture and its patriarchal roots.

Advocating for the recognition of the emancipation of women for their invaluable contributions to development and existence of humanity, Bishop Kukah declared: "...let us pay attention to those who *cannot breathe* because they are women. These include victims of; forced marriages, forced abortions, forced pregnancies in baby factories, forced slavery, rape, domestic violence, human trafficking, illiteracy, poverty etc. We cannot call ourselves Christians if we do not honour our blessed Mother and we cannot honour her without honouring motherhood." The local ordinary of Sokoto diocese continued: "Today, we take so much for granted in the world. The struggle for the emancipation of women is still very much a hard sell whether it is in our cultures or even in our churches. Girl education is still a challenge, forced marriages, rape, trafficking, prostitution are the lot of the young woman today.

Noting that the Gospel reading of the day challenges the faithful to carry their crosses in order to follow Christ, Bishop Kukah remarked that: "Living the Christian life today revolves around the choice between the flesh of unredeemed person and the spirit of the redeemed person. Both are marked by the promise of the Resurrection and the gift of the Holy Spirit of Christ. Living out the challenges of the redeemed person revolve around whether or not we are prepared or able to carry our crosses." Pointing out that every cross is a gift, the bishop noted that life itself is a cross and those who cannot carry it commit suicide midway. He added: "Wealth is a cross: if we do not use it well, it can make us miserable." Other types of crosses identified by the bishop include: "Doing a job one is not happy with; living in a difficult and abusive relationship; living with a situation of powerlessness; losing a loved one; caring for a terminally sick person; living with a terminal illness; living with a misfortune/tragedy and loss of a job; among others. He therefore urged the faithful

to hold their crosses as a precious gift from God stressing: “You will need it at the heavenly stock exchange”.

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