



## **CHRISTIANS URGED TO BE PATIENT IN THE MIDST OF TEMPTATIONS AND EVIL**

Aug 14, 2020

### **LAGOS -**

Rev. Fr. Francis Ike, Dean of Satellite Deanery, Lagos Archdiocese, in his admonishment, maintained that living a good Christian life, amidst the vices and challenges of earthly temptations require patience and emulating other virtues of God. He made the remarks in his homily during the celebration of the Mass for the 16th Sunday of the Church Year, 2020; at the Holy Cross Cathedral, Lagos.

Speaking on the theme \*His Patience is Great\* Fr. Ike used the Gospel reading of the parable of the Wheat and the weed, to emphasize the need for patience for Christians to live a meaningful life in a world full of evil and vices. He declared: "The readings of today call us to a deeper reflection upon our attitude in the midst of evil and wickedness. The Lord invites us to be like Him, he wants us to be forgiving, merciful and

compassionate like Himself ...”

Pointing out that the universal mission of Christ is the salvation of all human beings, irrespective of their spiritual or otherwise status, the homilist called on the faithful to take advantage of God’s patience as accentuated by the parable of the Seed and the weed, to change from ways of sin and frivolities, in order to attain eternal life in heaven. In his words: “The message of the parable clearly refers to the universal mission of Jesus to save all men. Just like the church is composed of the good and the bad, the beautiful and ugly, the slim and fat, the tall and short, the just and sinners; both will co-exist until harvest time when the Just, the Just Judge will sit on the judgment throne to separate the good from the bad; the righteous going to eternal glory and the bad to be eternally condemned in hell. We are therefore giving opportunity for renewal and repentance for God is a patient God.”

Fr. Ike reiterated, “Despite our knowledge that good and evil co-exist, our attitude towards evil should not be that of indifference. The worse sin towards our brother and sister is not to hate them or to be indifferent to them. If we passively accept evil or remain indifferent to it, we are

culpable like those who perpetuate it. The Lord is calling us today to do our best or make effort to stop, remove evil and wickedness in whatever form and wherever we can. We all have in us the wheat and weed aspect of our lives. The Holy Spirit comes to help us in our weakness and transforms our weeds to wheat. We must wake up from our spiritual slumber lest the devil takes advantage of our weakness.”

Noting that the state of evil in the country is alarming and frightful, Fr. Ike called on the faithful to remain steadfast and oppose actions and forces that undermine their faith, belief or religion. Again, he said, “Apart from the forces of the devil, we have also the forces or power of the society, that of the physical and social which we live in, within the power of the society is political power vested on those elected to govern us. We therefore call on all those in power to do the needful in fighting evil in our society.”

His words: “The incessant killings, rape, kidnapping, cultism, robbery, assassination, internet fraud, unlawful and unwarranted arrest of innocent citizens, police brutality, corruption and embezzlement of public fund, to mention but these few must be checked. These are indices of evil in our world and we must not fold our arms and watch them consume or choke us. Our security agents must wake up to their responsibilities.”

The homilist also used the occasion to stress the need for communal worship as a vital means of calling for God's intervention on the Corona Virus disease pandemic and urged the Government of Lagos State to lift ban on the opening of places of worship in the state; stressing that "There is no justification to open most institutions in the state, while the spiritual institution - our churches remain closed."