



CHANGE OF MENTALITY PANACEA FOR NIGERIA'S CHALLENGES

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JOS -

The challenges presently facing Nigeria as a nation that can only be better addressed through a change of mentality which will make us see ourselves “as brother and sisters who belong to everybody but belongs to nobody”, the Vicar General of Jos Archdiocese, Msgr. Cletus Tanimu Gotan has declared.

Msgr. Gotan, who described the call for secession as a negative approach to solving the nation’s problems; made the remarks in his homily at the celebration of the Thanksgiving Mass for the 60th Independence anniversary day of the country, held at the St Monica Rantya State Low cost, Jos, Plateau State. The Mass for the 26th Sunday of the Church Calendar year was also in thanksgiving of the reappointment of Sir Joseph Ntung Ari as the Director General of ITF.

Using the readings of the day to buttress his points, Msgr. Gotan, outlined the challenges facing the country and stressed the need for the collective responsibility of all Nigerians to rebuild the nation. He also urged the people to remember that they are both citizens of Nigeria and heaven.

He declared: “Your Excellencies, top government officials, distinguished Brothers and Sisters, as we celebrate our 60th independence as a country, let us remind ourselves of our dual citizenship: the fact that we are not just citizens of Nigeria but also Christians and citizen of heaven who have a mission to carry as well. If we wish to leave the upper room of our lives and carry out our mission as the Apostles of our own day, we need on this day to beg the Holy Spirit to fill us with tongues of fire, so that with passion, love, and courage, we might bring the Gospel out to our world which so desperately needs to embrace it”.

He continued: “In our celebration of the anniversary of our national independence, we unfortunately continue to hear the drums of war, we hear the cries of hunger, the cries

for freedom, cries for the restructuring of the country, for peace; people are being kidnapped and killed by their own brothers and sisters, armed robbery has become the order of the day, those elected into political offices are robbing the nation and starving their own people to death. If the truth is to be told, the Country has become so heavily and dangerously divided along religious lines like has never been seen before while tribalism has eaten deep into the unity of our people. Things are falling apart, and the center seems no longer to hold. Even the Church is packed full of fake prophets and prophetesses, deceiving and stealing in the name of God.”

The Archdiocesan Vicar General called for repentance and a change of heart on the part of all Nigerians, noting that, according to the Gospel reading of the day, changing our minds in order to do what is right in God’s eyes can lead us to eternal glory in heaven.

“PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY IS TOTAL OBEDIENCE TO THE WILL OF GOD”

The founder of the Lux Terra Leadership Foundation, Rev. Fr. George Ehusani has described practical Christianity as a vital proof of conversion and belief in the teachings of Christ. Fr. Ehusani made this assertion in his homily at the celebration of the Mass for the 26th Sunday of the Church Year for 2020; at the Foundation’s Church in Apo, Abuja.

Using the readings of the day, especially the Gospel reading on the two sons sent by their father to go and work on his farm; Fr. Ehusani stressed the importance of repentance and total obedience to the will of God as the epitome of true Christianity. He

condemned in all ramifications the paying of lip service to our practice of religion, noting this is very common among Christians, especially in our country, Nigeria. According to him, the country is fraught with abysmal social immorality, financial and social corruption and religiosity devoid of sincerity.

According to the Lux Terra Leadership Foundation Chief Executive, practice not words is what counts in true Christianity because “it is practice that determines our identity or status before God, not what we say we are with our lips”. He continued: “Promises can never take the place of performance and fine words can never be substitute to fine deeds.”

Speaking further on the analogy of the two sons in the Gospel reading, Fr. Ehusani stated that though nobody can be a perfect person as Jesus Christ; “the second son is better than the first because he repented and did the father’s will; though, still not the ideal son.” He continued: “The ideal son would be one who accepts at once and goes to carry out his father’s will; like Jesus Christ who in the words of St. Paul “emptied himself and became obedient to the point of death”.

Noting that faith must bear fruit in obedience, Fr. Ehusani used several references in the Bible to emphasize that “to do what is right and just is more acceptable to the Lord; and what the Lord requires is to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with God. He admonished the faithful to avoid the fruits of self-indulgence which he listed to include: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness and carousing. He enjoined them to embrace the fruits of the spirit of love, joy peace, patience, kindness, goodness, truthfulness, gentleness and self-control; stressing that “Faith without good works is dead.”.