



PRIESTHOOD IS NOT FOR PRESTIGE AND POWER, NEWLY ORDAINED PRIESTS TOLD

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KADUNA STATE -

Priestly vocation has been described as a call to prayer and service, not a life of prestige and power; neither is it for acquiring wealth or financial security. This assertion was made by Rev. Fr. Daniel James Kyom, in his homily at the ordination of new priests of the Catholic Archdiocese of Kaduna held, recently, at St. Dominic's Parish, Ungwan Pama, Kaduna.

Fr Kyom therefore, charged the newly ordained priests to see their priesthood to first and foremost be with Jesus in prayer; noting that the best gifts they would receive from the Archbishop after your ordination is the book of prayer otherwise called the Divine Office. He added: "This most precious gift should remind you always that whatever the circumstances, and whatever task is placed before you, prayer must accompany the exercise of your priestly ministry. Always pray for the Church, our country Nigeria, your families, friends and indeed those most in need of God's mercies".

Quoting Pope Benedict XVI, the homilist said; "the priest is called daily to rediscover in prayer the ever new face of his Lord and the most authentic content of his mission. Thus, only those who have a profound relationship with God through a life of faithful prayer are grasped by Him, can take Christ to others and can be sent out by Christ".

The preacher noted that for priests and religious, “Jesus reminds us that the priesthood or religious life can never and should never be a means of achieving financial security in life or acquiring wealth, for what does it profit a man or woman who wins the world only to lose their life? (Luke 9:25).

According to him, material prosperity gospel preaching has made many priests and pastors wealthy, but this does not have a place in Catholic theology. Speaking on a call to service, the homilist quoted from Matthew 20: 26-28 where it is said that ‘whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave, just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many’.

The homilist declared: “My dear ordinands, power they say corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. By the virtue of your ordination today, the church will confer on you authority and power to be used in the service of God and humanity. ... You must exercise your ministry with high sense of responsibility and avoid any temptation to abuse your power over those you are called to serve.”

He continued: “On a socio-political level, I must remind you my dear brothers that you are being ordained at a critical time in the history of our country and the world at large. Being ordained in 2020, I don’t want to call you ‘corona ordinands’, but as a metaphor, it should remind you, my beloved brothers, that we live in an unusual time. Life is unpredictable, transient and short. Keeping this truth in mind will help you to give your best each day in prayer and humble service to God and humanity, knowing that as the age old saying goes; ‘man proposes, but God disposes.’”

Fr. Kyom added: “As young men, Nigeria needs you now more than ever. I encourage you to exercise your prophetic ministry with humility and courage, by speaking truth to power without fear or favor. Give your voice to the voiceless wherever you find yourself. The ‘endsars’ hash-tag, has become a metaphor for a new social engineering in our country. As leaders of the people that will be entrusted to your care, do not imitate the leadership style of the

government of the day in Nigeria, where those who sing one Nigeria are the same people who have deliberately adopted policies capable of dividing the country; nepotism, tribalism and religious bias have kept Africa largely under-developed.”