



BISHOP FAGUN CHALLENGES PRESENT GENERATION ON CORE VALUES OF LIFE

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EKITI STATE -

The Bishop Emeritus of the Catholic Diocese of Ekiti, Most Rev Michael Fagun has called on the present generation of Nigerians to be serious about knowledge pursuit and self-reliance so that they can be very useful to the society. The bishop also took a swipe at some parents for the problems of the present generation of youths, noting that they (parents) aid their children and wards in examination malpractices, among other vices.

The Bishop stated this in his homily at the funeral Mass of Professor Gabriel Jimoh Afolabi Ojo, held recently at St. Patrick's Cathedral, Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State. The bishop recalled how Ekiti Diocese was created and the role of pioneer indigenes in the Catholic faith. He declared: "The purpose of recalling these past events is to prick the conscience of our present generation, to make the present age rethink and be up and doing, because we are missing our noble past, the past that earned us the sobriquet: *Ekiti Ile Iyi Ile Eye*. Surely, we are missing that great nobility of character and performance today."

He continued: "Just look at it, is the present age serious about knowledge pursuit and self-reliance as to be useful to the society. On the contrary examination malpractice is rampant and material gratification extorted for examination pass mark. Even parents today cooperate in procuring examination papers for their children! Nigeria is infamous for University strikes; the cause is in us, not in our stars."

According to Bishop Fagun: “The result of course is mass lack of knowledge. And nothing kills more than ignorance.” He noted that, “to destroy any nation doesn’t require the use of atomic bombs or any long-range missiles, it only needs the lowering of education standards and cheating at the examinations.”

“Such products have been cynically referred to as future not generation, but degeneration. In the past a teacher was a man of honour, well respected in the society, so it was in the old time of Prof. Afolabi Ojo, you will understand why he took to teaching as a profession and achieved the rank of a professor.

“However, from the spiritual point of view, the book of Daniel puts it, ‘those who are wise will shine as brightly as the expanse of the heavens, and those who have instructed many in righteousness, will be as bright as stars for all eternity’ (Dan 12:13).

“A good teacher lives on in the heart of his students, unlike today when students emerging from their cult invested college camps do riot against their lecturers. What a different between our past and the present age. Owuróní í fi alá han. Thorn trees don’t produce oranges. And whatever may be the shortcoming of Nigerian governance today is due to low development standard of the populace in the main. Bishop Fagun stressed that the future of Nigeria put in the hands of her today’s products is foreboding ill. “The young ones in the main today are morally bankrupt, deep in sensuality, materialism, consumerism with no interest whatsoever in productivity. And this is based on the lack of adequate home upbringing and fellowship with bad peer groups.

Speaking on the life of the deceased, Bishop Fagun described Prof. Afolabi Ojo as a good Christian family man who lives on in the hearts of his children who love him so much for his cherished devotion to them that has made them what they are today, decent and learned, self-reliant citizens of Nigeria through the grace of almighty God.

The Bishop spoke extensively on the role of the deceased in the life of the Catholic Church in Ekitiland , and the country in general, especially in the mobilization of the lay faithful, spiritually and pastorally. He described him as a God fearing and faithful Catholic who impacted positively on the society in general.

He added: "Think about being a good Christian, Prof Afalabi Ojo was an ideal Christian family man, faithful to one wife. As socially engaged as he was, he and his wife were inseparable, cherished her and committed to her in thick and thin." The late Professor Ojo was the National President of the Catholic Laity Council of Nigeria(CLCN), 1985-1990.