



## **“CATHOLIC PRIESTS MUST NOT TELL PEOPLE WHAT THEY WANT TO HEAR”**

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### **CATHOLIC SECRETARIAT OF NIGERIA -**

Catholic priests have been admonished to avoid preaching prosperity gospel but tell the people what they ought to know and not what they want to hear. They have also been described as a bridge, a signboard, a judge, reconciler, teacher, a prophet and not the type of prophet who predicts election results or sees vision for people, which makes him a soothsayer.

Rev Fr Lawrence H. Dim stated this in his homily at the 25<sup>th</sup> Priestly Ordination and 52<sup>nd</sup> birthday Thanksgiving Mass of the Secretary General, Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, Very Rev Fr. Zacharia Samjumi.

According to Fr Dim, a prophet is concerned with the truth of God and “he prays and leads the people to genuinely seek God and to do His will. According to the homilist, the temptation today is to equate worship with merely the preacher’s dramatic church services that promise material prosperity or success in life. Like John the Baptist, a prophet or a man of God tells the truth and is ready to suffer the consequences. How many of our so-called prophets

or pastors are ready to suffer for the faith or for the nation? the cleric asked.

He continued: "A priest is not one who tells people what they want to hear, about prosperity, miracles or one who thinks he can compel God to do people's will. What marks Catholic spirituality out is that a Catholic prays and patiently allows God's will to be done. Many of those who move from one Church to another Church are not really doing so to worship God but are in search of motivational speakers who will assure them that there is a cheaper Christianity that does not tolerate suffering but only celebrates success and miracles. For good Catholics, religion is about adoration and worship of God", Fr Dim explained.

While congratulating Rev. Fr. Zacharia Samjumi on his double celebration, Fr. Dim also noted that: "Priestly ordination anniversary is a period to show gratitude that unworthy as we are as human beings the Lord has called us to serve Him and humanity. It is a celebration of God's loving choice for mission and his providential care and guidance.

The homilist added: "He chooses men whose only qualification is that they are unqualified and weak in every human sense yet chosen to do incredible things such as offering the Eucharistic sacrifice in which Jesus comes down on the altar in the form of bread and wine, forgiveness of sins through sacramental absolution".