



LENT IS A SEASON OF SPIRITUAL WARFARE AGAINST DEVIL, Archbishop Kaigama declares

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ABUJA, NIGERIA -

Archbishop Ignatius kaigama of the Catholic Archdiocese of Abuja has described Lent as a period of spiritual warfare against the devil or his agents who cause multidimensional evils in our world.

The Prelate noted that in Nigeria today some of the evils confronting our country include kidnapping, banditry, murderous activities of armed gunmen who kill people and rape women; immorality and corruption that are as devastating to our well-being as the coronavirus.

The Archbishop, who stated this in his homily of the First Sunday of Lent, reminded the faithful that: "During Lent, we beg God to re-create us from within to bring out something new in us so that we can follow Him sincerely and be able to confront and defy Satan".

Quoting the first reading from Genesis 9:8-15, Archbishop Kaigama stated that the people of Noah's days were described as corrupt and full of lawlessness, as against Genesis 1:31, where "God saw all that He had made, and it was very good", noting that the flood that resulted was allowed by God to wash away evil so that the world would be renewed and return to its former state of innocence.

He continued: "The Gospel of Mark refers to Jesus being tempted by Satan, but it is in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke that we learn the details. The devil asked Jesus to turn stones into bread, to use his power to meet his personal needs, namely, to put on a sensational display of power, in a self-gratifying manner, to satisfy his human hunger. To do so would have been a dangerous distraction and diversion from Jesus' path of obedience to God, so, Jesus disarmed the devil by saying, "Man does not live on bread alone" (Mt. 4:4).

The Archbishop said like coronavirus, the devil is very real and prowling round in our decadent society like a roaring lion. "He puts in the heart of political, religious and traditional leaders the greed for material riches and love for power. King Solomon as a leader asked God only for wisdom to lead his people in justice and fear of the Lord (cf. 1 Kgs. 3:9). Leaders today are only concerned about fraudulently perpetuating themselves in power and the acquisition of riches to the detriment of the people they lead".

He therefore urged the faithful to emphatically resist the devil who continually tempts ethnic and religious groups to be selfish and myopic, husbands and wives to be morally deviant and unfaithful; youths to be recalcitrant and violent; kidnappers to dehumanize fellow human beings for money; militant herdsmen to destroy food crops, religious fundamentalists to kill for reasons they don't even understand and bandits to unleash terror on innocent citizens.

"While millions of Nigerians are unemployed, the devil and his agents have no problem with lack of work. They are very busy causing confusion in homes and offices. Only the "Jesus method" can check-mate them: prayer. The devil is afraid of prayers. Somehow, we give the devil far more credit than he deserves by rationalizing our crimes, attributing them to him instead of blaming ourselves for the misuse of our freedom. We even pronounce the devil's name more often instead of the Holy Spirit.

Archbishop Kaigama concluded his homily by urging the people of God to wear their mask against coronavirus, "but don't wear the mask of hypocrisy to disguise evil. Temptations are a fact of life but God says, "My grace is enough for you" (2 Cor. 12:9). May the Angels, who ministered to Jesus in the desert, also minister to us in our struggles against sin and temptation", Kaigama prayed.