



## **ARCHBISHOP OKEKE TO CHURCH LEADERS: YOU CAN'T INSPIRE IF YOU'RE NOT ON FIRE WITH DIVINE LOVE**

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### **ENUGU- NIGERIA -**

The Catholic Archbishop of Onitsha, Most Rev. Valerian Okeke has charged all Church leaders to be good leaders and teachers to their faithful even as he challenged them saying that “You cannot inspire if you are not on fire with divine love”.

Archbishop Okeke stated this in his homily on Friday, August 20, 2021 during the morning Mass and lauds of the day at the ongoing second plenary of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) holding at Holy Ghost Cathedral Enugu.

According to the Metropolitan of Onitsha, the people of God are perishing and some are leaving the Catholic faith due to the attitude of some various Church leaders. Some of us are pursuing money, wealth and politics and because of that the Church is suffering and our people are perishing. Today, we allow some of our people to move away from the Church because of our conduct. Other people are fishing from our pond. This is what I

call exaggeration and excesses because of the conduct of our superiors and priests.

The Archbishop continued: “Let us lead our people by example. Let us renew our way of life. As priests, we pray and offer sacrifice to God and to the world but as leaders, we must inspire our followers. A good leader inspires followership. A good teacher does not only inform but inspires. We are leaders and meant to be teachers. Let us reform our Congregations and Dioceses.”, Archbishop Okeke advised.

He urged all to emulate the life of St. Bernard, whose memorial was celebrated today, noting that St. Bernard was an abbot, a monk, whose exemplary life is worthy of emulation by all leaders. “St. Bernard was an abbot who played a role of a teacher, a formator and leader. The terms superior or mother-general were not used then but he was a monk, who was in charge of a monastery. As we begin this Conference with a meeting of Superiors of Religious Congregations, we ask that the Spirit should continue to renew the Church and I pray for the success of the Conference. Superiors of Congregations, let us emulate the qualities of St. Bernard”.