



BE MINISTERS AND NOT ENTERTAINERS, ARCHBISHOP AUDU CHARGES CATHOLIC CHORISTERS

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JOS- NIGERIA -

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The Archbishop of Jos Archdiocese, His Grace, Most Rev. Matthew Audu, has charged Catholic Choristers to be more professional in their choice of songs during liturgical celebrations.

His Grace gave this charge in his homily at the opening Mass for the 11th Conference of the National Catholic Liturgical Music Council of Nigeria (NACALIMCON), held at St. Augustine's Major Seminary, Jos, Plateau State. The 3-day programme with the theme, Preserving the Rich Musical Heritage of the Catholic Church, commenced on Wednesday, 22nd September and is scheduled to end on Saturday, 25th September, 2021.

While welcoming the members of NACALIMCON, the Chief Shepherd saluted their courage for choosing Jos for their 2021 meeting in spite of the spate of violence recently experienced in the State. He prayed God turns their courage into peace for the people of Jos and for Nigeria at large.

Citing the teachings of St. Paul on speaking in tongues and the need to have an interpreter, he strongly condemned the growing habit by many choristers who sing songs that nobody can understand in the Church. He reminded the choristers that they are ministers in the liturgy and not entertainers, and therefore must maintain professionalism during liturgical celebrations.

Archbishop Audu noted that it is appalling and disheartening to see people in the Church who instead of worshipping God by participating fully in singing unto God, are rather listening to the music for entertainment. “Those of you who are saddled with this responsibility will have to work hard to ensure that they lead the people in singing, instead of singing for the people.” The prelate also observed that “with Vatican II, we are allowed to bring different languages into the Mass, but sometimes, I don’t think we are doing this to worship God, rather to draw attention to ourselves.”

Furthermore, the Archbishop stated that “while Protestants are admiring us and want to become like we Catholics, we want to copy them. Look at the hymns that we have, we

have so many hymns in our Catholic Hymn Books, but how many Choristers really use them today? Instead, we prefer choruses and special numbers.” He concluded that “there is no place for special numbers in the Catholic liturgical celebration.”

Participants at the Conference comprise choristers from Dioceses and Archdioceses across Nigeria who are discussing how best to improve the use of liturgical music in Catholic worship in the country. They are expected to take the resolutions of the Conference back to their various dioceses for implementation.