



INDEPENDENCE: WE CAN MAKE NIGERIA GREAT AGAIN -ARCHBISHOP MARTINS

Sep 29, 2021

LAGOS, NIGERIA -

As Nigeria marks its 61st independent anniversary on Friday, October 1, 2021 amidst so much insecurity and other areas of anxiety, the Catholic Archbishop of Lagos, Most Rev. Alfred Adewale Martins has assured Nigerians that a bright future still lies ahead provided there is sincerity of purpose and the will to be just and equitable from all and sundry.

Archbishop Martins gave the assurance in his 61st Independence anniversary message to Nigerians signed by the Director of Social Communications, Rev. Fr. Anthony Godonu and made available to CSN Media Office on Wednesday, September 29, 2021.

The Metropolitan of Lagos noted that the country was passing through one of the most challenging periods since independence in 1960, and therefore urged the various ethnic nationalities not to give up on the unity of the country, but to take the necessary

proactive steps to right the wrongs that have afflicted us and bring about a country that all would be proud to associate with.

Archbishop Martins accused members of the political class across the various political parties of deliberately and continuously playing the ethnic and religious cards across the various ethnic nationalities in order to further perpetuate unhealthy rivalry in the polity for their selfish parochial interests.

He said the solution to most of Nigeria's problems can be found quickly if the political actors and their associates would set aside their mundane interests and work for the common good and the welfare of all.

“At this time that we celebrate the 61st independence anniversary of our country, we must thank God for the gift of life and for keeping the country together, despite the atrocities being committed by criminals of various descriptions who through their atrocious acts of blood-letting have led thousands of our fellow citizens to their untimely death and loss of properties. It is indeed a miracle of sorts that despite all these anomalies across the land, we are still here to mark this year’s independence. We pray that this will not be the last and that our country will continue to thrive.

We shall thrive and bounce back again only if we are able to address the fact that we are

sitting on a keg of gunpowder. We are all aware of the issues that need to be addressed but which the leadership at all levels has not found the will to address. Such issues as insecurity, ethnicism, the activities of boko haram and bandits, perceived and/or real marginalisation in the scheme of things, corruption, mass unemployment, poverty, lack of good health care system, religious bigotry and fanaticism etc are leading the country in the direction of disintegration. Evil is thriving in our land because most of those in positions of leadership and majority of the followers over the years have failed to do the needful. And unfortunately, no one is being held accountable. The celebration of the independence anniversary of our country, presents us with another opportunity to reason together and face the reality that all is not well with us. We must be brave enough to confront these challenges with honesty and objectivity or else we risk the disintegration of the country; God forbid!!”

Archbishop Martins also reiterated his call for a total overhaul of the present structure of governance in country. According to him, the present system is so badly skewed that there would always be people who feel left out and unjustly treated in the scheme of things within the country. Therefore, there is a need for discussion and negotiation among the peoples of Nigeria so that we can attain the restructuring that would move the country away from the brink of failure that we have found ourselves.

Finally, he said: The Scriptures have told us that unless the Lord builds the house, the labourer labours in vain. We must therefore continue to ask God in prayers for the unity and prosperity of the country as well as the security of lives and properties of the people. Since all things are possible with God, we are assured that Nigeria will be great again. God bless Nigeria and restore all that we have lost over the years. Amen