



## CATHOLIC MEDIA PRACTITIONERS URGED TO BE COURAGEOUS

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**BENIN CITY, NIGERIA** - Catholic Archbishop of Benin City and Vice President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), Most Rev. Augustine Obiora Akubeze has called on Catholic media practitioners to be courageous in the discharge of their duties noting that; `Living A Christian life requires courage, determination and standing on the side of truth, no matter how unpopular it may be.`

Archbishop Akubeze made this call in his homily at the opening Mass for the training workshop organized by the Directorate of Social Communications, Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN) in conjunction with Signis World and support of the pontifical Mission Societies. The 3-day training programme took place, recently, at the Bishop Kelly Pastoral Centre, Benin City, Edo State.

The theme for the workshop was: The Role of the Media in the New Evangelization Era: Case Study of The Nigerian Church, and about 50 diocesan communication directors and other Catholic media practitioners from Lagos, Ibadan and Benin Provinces and staff of the national office were in attendance.

Noting that courage is essential for the participants and their other colleagues, particularly in the New Evangelization era, the Archbishop said; `It requires that we chose to be insignificant in the sight of men as long as it is significant in the sight of God.`

The Archbishop however warned: `To do this, we must be prepared to come face to face with opposition of various degrees from family, friends and colleagues etc. It is an evil age where the good is denounced as evil and evil is praised and even celebrated.` He added: `So, the darkness in our society particularly in our country should frighten us and perhaps gear up some consciousness of our duty of all cooperating with God even in the face of death.`

Speaking on the good and bad sides of journalism, the local ordinary of Benin City remarked that the world today is in dire need of men and women who will not cover the truth, but men and women who will rather become unpopular for holy and sane values than soil their hands in pursuit of fame.

While stressing that the media should not be used for the actualization of material and selfish gains, the Archbishop regretted that the re-evangelization vision of the Church has suffered severe blows in the hands of media practitioners. He therefore stressed the need for the reclaim of the Church's position as mother and teacher through a vigorous and timely evangelization.

Archbishop Akubeze stressed: Evangelization has got to be more relevant today than ever. Since their views promoted through the media is merciless, there is need for corresponding merciless reclaiming of what is our right.

He stated further: If the media is used to corrupt our people, we must use the media to teach the truth. For only in this way, can we redeem our given society.