



BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION PROVIDES OPPORTUNITY FOR EVALUATION OF IMPACT ON THE LIFE OF OTHERS

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IBADAN, NIGERIA -

The celebration of birthday is not only to express gratitude to God for His blessings and graces but also an opportunity to measure the positive impact of one's life on the people and the society, during the period of time. This contention was contained in the homily of the Catholic Bishop of Ondo Diocese, Most. Rev. Jude Arogundade, at the 70th Birthday Thanksgiving Mass for the Archbishop of Ibadan Archdiocese, Most Rev. Gabriel 'Leke Abegunrin.

The ceremony which took place at the Church of the Ascension, Bodija, Ibadan, Oyo State, recently; was attended by a powerful delegation of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), led by its President, Most Rev. Augustine Obiora Akubeze; dignitaries from all walks of life from different parts of the country; traditional rulers; priests, religious, Knights of the Church and lay faithful from the Ecclesiastical province of Ibadan.

Commending the celebrant for his exemplary priestly life, humility, devotion, dedication, love and concern for the spiritual and pastoral well-being of his flock as a chief Shepherd of Ibadan Ecclesiastical Province; Bishop Arogundade

declared: “The worth of seventy years, lived in the service of God and man is measured by the good impacts the years have made on the people. We salute you for the sacrifices of the past years and the leadership that have lit the way for so many people.”

The homilist continued: “Time after time, you have given us new courage to face life cheerfully and to stretch our hands in the embrace of the joy of Christian faith. The kind-heartedness with which you welcome the afflicted and the beauty of truth that attracts and gives dignity to life are some of the values that we celebrate in you.”

Bishop Arogundade went down memory lane on the life of the celebrant, most of which have been in the service of humanity to the glory of God as priest and Bishop, and noted: “As challenging as your responsibilities were, in an uncomplaining manner you gave your best, not thinking about self-interest. The only interest that mattered was the good of the Church.” The Local Ordinary of Ondo Diocese also spoke on the life of the Church and her challenges, the Pastoral office of Bishops; emphasizing that the celebrant leads the Church in Yorubaland “that is highly moralistic and traditionalistic”; outlining the values, traditions, life and cultures of the race in the perspective of the doctrine and life of the Catholic Church.

Speaking at the ceremony, the President of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Nigeria (CBCN); Most Rev. Augustine Obiora Akubeze noted that Archbishop Abegunrin has allowed the grace of God to bear fruits in his life and the Church in Nigeria rejoices with him for what he has done with the gift of life.” He concluded that the celebrant is a man with strong burning desire for inculturation; stressing: “His love and wishes are for our culture to be reflected in

our Liturgy in a way that respect both our Africannes and our Catholic belief.”