



INEQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF NATION'S WEALTH PREVENTS DEVELOPMENT - Archbishop Akubeze

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ABEOKUTA, NIGERIA -

The President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) and Archbishop of Benin City, Most Rev. Augustine Obiora Akubeze has reiterated that peace will always elude the country as long as there is no fair share of the nations' wealth, justice and equity. Archbishop Akubeze made this assertion in his address while declaring open the second Plenary Assembly of the Conference for the year 2019, hosted recently, by the Catholic Diocese of Abeokuta, a Suffragan of the Lagos Ecclesiastical Province.

The assembly which took place at the Divine Mercy Pastoral Centre, Agbamaya, Obada Oko, Abeokuta, Ogun State; was attended by about 60 members of the Conference, including John Cardinal Onaiyekan of Abuja, Anthony Cardinal Okogie, emeritus of Lagos Archdiocese; the Apostolic Nuncio to Nigeria, Archbishop Antonio Guido Filipazzi; the Governor of Ogun State, Dapo abiodun; the Alake of Egbaland, Oba Adedotun Aremu Gbadebo III; other traditional rulers, Ministers, dignitaries from all walks of life from different parts of the country; priests, Religious, Knights of the Church and the lay faithful.

Giving a graphic description to buttress his point, the CBCN President declared: ““Very often, the simple index for judging how just a society is, is to look at the nature of the fences surrounding private houses. The higher the fences, the less just the society has been in terms of sharing wealth. The lower the fences the more just the society has been in sharing wealth among its citizens.”

The CBCN President continued: “...a society that wants to grow, develop and build for the future must first have peace, development does not take place during crisis. Development do not take place during crisis. People do not build their economy during crisis.” He continued: “What leads to crisis in every part of the world is injustice. Injustice is the fertile ground for breeding violence, for creating war, for promoting generational prejudice, it is the ground for destruction.”

Archbishop Akubeze also used the occasion to speak on the lopsidedness of appointments in government, especially at the Federal level and urged for the correction of this imbalance in the name of justice and equity. Speaking on the deplorable state of the nation in terms of security and other challenges, Archbishop Akubeze noted that: “Every Government that fails to protect the constitutional rights of her citizens has failed”. He added: “If the leaders of a country cannot ensure peace and security, they have no business using payers’ money to provide security for themselves and their families while the rest of Nigerians are dying daily.”

The Metropolitan of Benin City Archdiocese also called on the government to work on the national integration of the country and avoid the establishment of cultural or religious hegemony in a constitutional secular state like the

country. He also urged the faithful to pray for those in government so that “God would expunge from their hearts the desire to enrich themselves with the resources of the people; adding: “We must stop celebrating those who have embezzled our resources” and pray for justice in the land.

Addressing his brother Bishops as the beginning of the Plenary, Archbishop Akubeze stressed the importance of solidarity among the Bishops as brothers and the need to relate cordially; while in the area of Episcopal solidarity they should collaboratively speak on matters that concern their area; especially in time of need.