



## COMMUNICATION, AN ESSENTIAL FACTOR FOR BUILDING RELATIONSHIP

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### JOS, NIGERIA -

Communication has been described as an essential factor for building relationship in all facets of life and its effective application in the promotion of the Good News of Christ cannot be controverted. This was the kernel of the homily delivered by Rev. Fr. Chris Anyanwu, the Deputy Secretary General and National Director of Social Communications, Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN), Durumi, Abuja; at the opening Mass for the 2019 National Convention of Catholic Media Practitioners Association of Nigeria (CAMPAN), held recently in Jos, Plateau State.

The CSN Deputy Secretary General therefore called on Catholic journalists and media practitioners to use their God-given gifts and professional skills to promote Gospel values and reach-out with the Good News of Christ for the common good of humanity and to the glory of God.

The four-day programme which had *The New Media and Evangelization in Nigeria: A Reflection* as its theme took place at the Sacred Heart Pastoral Centre, Jos, was attended by about 60 delegates from all the nine Ecclesiastical Provinces of the Church in Nigeria. Urging the delegates to be contented with whatever gift God has given them, Fr. Anyanwu stated they should use this gift of God, individually and collectively as evangelization agents to propagate the Gospel as directed by Christ.

Speaking on the theme of the convention, Fr. Anyanwu reminded the delegates that evangelization is about making Christ known and promoting Gospel values; adding that this is the primary goal of the communication apostolate of the Church in the country and the Universal Church. He stated further that every gathering of the association is a renewal of the commitment for the building of this relationship among the people of God and every available means must be used to realize the objectives of this mission.

Using several documents of the Church to buttress his point on the significance of communication in the evangelization apostolate of the Church, Fr. Anyanwu noted that the members of the association should positively maximize the advantage of the new media for the propagation of the Gospel and the teachings of Christ. He however, added that in this perspective, everything must be done rightly and positively as the new media will make their work as evangelizers easier and faster.

His words: "Organizing ourselves in a more coordinated manner for the purpose of communication evangelization apostolate, using the new media will make our work easier and better, but everything must be done positively. He continued: "The Lord is happy when we do what is right by imparting on peoples' lives positively with the promotion of Christ's Gospel values. It is paramount for us to realize the importance of this assignment."

The CSN director further noted that Catholic media practitioners in the context of evangelization should do the right thing while anything contrary "will hurt and hunt us". He continued: "Let us play our individual and collective roles to make the voice of the Church heard and promote Gospel values. Whatever gift God has given us, let us use it to propagate Christ and his mission in the world."

In his address at the opening ceremony, Fr. Anyanwu commended the pioneer executives of the association for the gradual and progressive steps taking so far to lay the necessary solid foundation to make the organization a virile agent of communication evangelization for the Church in the country. He informed the delegates that it is the ultimate desire of the Bishop Chairman, Most Rev. Denis Isizoh that chapters of the body are established in all the

dioceses where they are yet to exist.

He also urged that efforts should also be geared at reaching out to big Catholic media players in the industry; serving or retired; so that they can also contribute to the growth of the communication apostolate of the Church in the country. His words: “You have them scattered all over the dioceses. Some of them may have retired, others are now politicians and some have their own private media outfit. You must develop strategies on the best ways of reaching out to them.”

While noting the “dizzying series of breakthroughs and game changing advances in the communications world, Fr. Anyanwu stated that the people, including the faithful of the Church are living in a new world of social media. He admonished that using the new media for evangelization ought to be based on Christ’s method to mingle with people where they are, sympathize with them, meet their needs, and invite them to follow Jesus.”

The National Director then challenged CAMPAN members to address some issues that are relevant for the mission of the association in the country. These are: what New Evangelization look like in this world of communications; how to help build stronger relationships with millions of Catholic as media practitioners in their respective places of work and how to increase the effectiveness of Catholic communicators in sanctifying, teaching, and governing by using the tools of 21<sup>st</sup> century communications.