



CATHOLIC YOUTHS URGED TO EMBRACE SOCIAL TEACHINGS OF THE CHURCH

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ABUJA - The Catholic Bishop of Ogoja Diocese and Episcopal Chairman of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) Youth Committee, Most Rev. John Ayah has called on Catholic youths to embrace the social teachings and aspirations of the Church hierarchy for their spiritual and temporal formation for the benefit of the Church and society at large.

The admonition was contained in the short keynote address delivered on behalf of the Bishop Chairman, by the Bishop of Maiduguri, Most Rev. Oliver Dashe Doeme, who represented Bishop Ayah at the Fund Raising and Merit Award Dinner Night organized by the Catholic Youth Organization in Abuja, recently.

Urging the youths to sincerely come closer to the Church, the bishop encouraged them to keep the struggle on, in order to realize the noble dream of having a youth centre in Abuja, which will take care of the formation of Youths in Nigeria.

Also Speaking at the occasion, the director of Pastoral Agents department, Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN) Rev. Fr. Peter Okonkwo, CMF stressed the need to urgently engage in the formation of youths and recalled the mandate of the His Holiness Benedict XVI in this respect. He then called on all present at the fund raising ceremony to support the youths in their struggle to raise funds for the centre to be built in Abuja.

In his own speech, the chairman of the Occasion, Chief Victor Umeh, National Chairman of APGA, commended the youths for their efforts at building a youth centre in the country. According to him, this is a project that should be supported by all privileged Nigerians, because, when the youths are formed the level of crime in the society will definitely reduce. He described the efforts of the Catholic Church in this direction as a welcome development.

The memorable ceremony which took place at the Shehu Musa Yar'Adua International Conference Centre, Abuja, featured a fund-raising for the proposed N500million Catholic Youth Multi-purpose Centre complex, presentation of Recognition Merit Awards to Nigerians who have supported the cause of the youth development in the country and the decoration of patrons and patronesses of the association.

Speaking on the proposed project, the Secretary of CBCN Youth Committee, Rev. Fr. Charles Ndubisi noted that the N500 million Naira multipurpose complex is targeted towards the provision of facilities for training of Catholic Youths in skill acquisition programmes and youth formation as well as the realization of the Church's youth empowerment programme. The highlight of the event also included the presentation of the design of the N500 million Naira multipurpose complex. Rev. Fr. Charles Ndubisi, who was also an awardee, described the ceremony as very successful adding that "it was a movement towards the right direction."

Awardees at the ceremony included: the Archbishop of Abuja, Most Rev. John Onaiyekan; the Secretary General of the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, Very Rev. Michael Ekpenyong; the Supreme subordinate President of the Knights of St John International, Major Gen, Prof. Celestine Onwuliri; the National President of Catholic Women Organization of Nigeria (CWO) Chief Mrs. Felicia Onyeabor and the former Inspector General of Police, Sir Mike Okiro who was also the Father of the Day.