

Written by Raph

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The new President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), Most Rev. Ignatius Kaigama has outlined the qualities that make Catholic Education unique adding that it is for the common good of all.

Archbishop Kaigama made this assertion while performing his first function as the new president of the Conference at the Sod turning and Ground breaking at the permanent site of Veritas University, recently in Bwari, Abuja. The university which began operations at its temporary site in Obehie in Ukwa West Local Government Area, Abia State in 2008, is owned by the Catholic Church in Nigeria.

Giving thanks for the realization of the day, the Archbishop noted; “if wishes were horses, this Sod turning and foundation laying ceremony would have been done five years ago.” He continued: “At this event, we intend to proclaim the indispensable role of Catholic Education in our education system as a nation and to express our commitment as a Church in offering an integral education to all without discrimination.”

Expatiating on Catholic Education, Archbishop Kaigama, who is the Archbishop of Jos declared: “Catholic education is geared towards the promotion of the common good and the provision of services that are public in nature, thus Catholic education is of public interest and not a private venture.”

He continued: “ Catholic schools all over the world have been known for offering qualitative education, the distinctive mark of qualitative education offered by Catholic schools lies in all-round education which takes into account the social, economic, political, psychological, moral, spiritual and physical aspect of the human person.”

The Archbishop added: “Catholic education is predicated on the basic principles of Catholic Social teachings which are gospel values and true universal values.” According to him, the Catholic Church emphasises on the integral development of the human person, to produce persons who will cherish service to society above personal gain, good conduct and character

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above material possessions.

According to the CBCN President, “ Education is integral when it takes into cognisance the perspective of eternal life namely: humanity’s higher hope. Qualitative education like development concerns the whole of the person in every single dimension.” In this sense, qualitative education requires a transcendent dimension and therefore needs God to be in it, he noted.

Archbishop Kaigama while calling on the people to invest more on education clearly stated that the Church is not in any way in competition with government in the education sector but participating in giving what she knows best.

He contended that it is only through collaboration by all stakeholders that we may succeed “in giving our young people an integral education that can counter the prevailing relativistic tendencies lying in negative conditions that seek the destruction of human society.”

The ceremony was attended by all members of CBCN at the first Plenary Meeting of the Conference in Abuja and dignitaries from both the academic and industrial communities of the country