



KD/B/C/20/18
Saturday 24 October, 2020

***“A voice is heard in Ramah, lamenting and weeping bitterly; it is Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more”
(Jer. 31:15)***

The above prophetic words of Jeremiah were quoted by St. Matthew while recounting the flight to Egypt of Joseph and Mary and the Baby Jesus, in order to escape the evil plot of the wicked King Herod to kill the Baby Jesus. Herod had ordered the merciless slaughter of all male children, under two years of age, in the town of Bethlehem in the vain hope of getting rid of the Baby Jesus. The slaughter of the Holy Innocents was in fulfillment of the above prophecy of Jeremiah.

Today Saturday 24 October, 2020, Kumba is reliving that prophecy not long after the heinous massacre of innocent children and pregnant women in Ngarbuh in the Diocese of Kumbo in May 2020. The voice of the “New Rachel” Kumba, is heard lamenting and weeping bitterly for her children, because they are no more. Today is the darkest and saddest day for Kumba since the socio-political crisis affecting the North West and South West Regions started in 2016, and which has now escalated into war. Today Saturday 24 October, 2020, Kumba, the Green City, known for its peace and hospitality has been stricken by the grief of the murder of her children before midday.

From the information we got, it was about 11.30 am when some unidentified gun men moved into Mother Francisca International Bilingual Academy, in Bamilike Street, Fiango Kumba and opened fire on students in a classroom and out of the twelve students assaulted, six were killed and the others who were seriously wounded were rushed to the hospital. Because of this barbarous act, the people of Kumba are wailing, the entire Diocese of Kumba is mourning, our hearts have been crushed because our innocent children are no more.


We are crying and asking why our children were murdered? What did they do wrong? Is it because they went to school? Were they not allowed to go to school by those who previously restricted them for the past four years? How could they then ask children to go to school and turn around to massacre them? Who then could have done such a gruesome act? We are mourning and pondering in our painful hearts, is enough not enough? Was Ngarbuh not enough? How much of the blood of our children need to be shed before something concrete and immediate is done? How long will the powers that be and are capable of restoring peace and tranquility in the distressed North West and South West Regions sit and wait? How long will the authorities concerned watch and see? Will all our children die before something is done? We are desperately crying and wailing and asking, what is holding back those concerned, I mean the International Bodies and the Government of Cameroon to look for a lasting solution to this problem that will restore justice and peace? We are painfully weeping and pondering, what is so

important other than PEACE that will make us sit back in indifference and watch tender and precious lives being wasted away?

In our pain and sorrow we stand by the parents of the deceased students, their families and the students and staff of Mother Francisca International Bilingual Academy, in sympathy and solidarity, to strongly condemn the perpetrators of this terrible and satanic manifestation of disrespect and desecration of human life, which is a gift from God. After the Ngarbuh massacre we heard condemnations of the wicked act from all the continents and statements like, "Never again should such a thing happen", were uttered and barely five months after it has happened again from Ngarbuh to Kumba. Where will it be next, if something concrete and immediate is not done by the powers that be and can make things happen?

My dear people wrapped in grief, our only true hope is God! Let us turn to Him in our desperation and prayerfully cry to Him to come to our assistance. Let us pray that by the power of the Holy Spirit He may turn the wicked and stone hearts of the Herod(s) (the murderers of our children) into hearts of love and flesh. Let us pray for His divine intervention in the search for a lasting solution to the crisis so that justice and peace may reign, for He is a God of Justice and Peace. He is our only hope! I therefore, as your spiritual father, invite you all especially school children and students and parents and guardians to join me in the Sacred Heart Cathedral, Fiango Kumba on **Friday 30 October, 2020, at 3.00 pm** to pray for the repose of the souls of our dear and innocent students who were murdered, and to pray for God's consolation on their parents and families and guardians, and for all our traumatized pupil and students. During that Mass, we shall also pray for the forgiveness and conversion of the Herod(s), the perpetrators of this heinous and barbarous act, while asking our Loving Father in Heaven to intervene for a lasting solution to be found so that true justice and peace may reign.

May our Mother Mary, Our Lady of Sorrows intercede for us in our distress.


+Agapitus Nfon
Bishop of Kumba.

