

**MOST REV. PETER EBERE OKPALEKE
C/O DIOCESAN CATHOLIC SECRETARIAT
P. M. B 5021, AWKA
ANAMBRA STATE - NIGERIA**

February 14, 2018

His Holiness

Pope Francis

Vatican City

Through;

His Eminence

Cardinal Fernando Filoni

Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples

Vatican City

Through;

His Grace

Most Rev. Antonio Guido Filipazzi

Apostolic Nuncio to Nigeria

No. 6 Pope John Paul II Crescent

Maitama District, P. M. B 541, Abuja

Your Holiness,

**RESIGNATION FROM THE OFFICE OF BISHOP OF AHIARA
DIOCESE OF NIGERIA**

I am Most Rev. Peter Ebere OKPALEKE. I thank God and Your Holiness for entrusting me, in my unworthiness, with the responsibility of shepherding the flock of Christ in AHIARA Diocese of Nigeria. I also thank all your close collaborators especially the Secretariat of State and the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples for the confidence reposed in me. I thank your Holiness for the trust and solidarity you have shown me these years.

Unfortunately, the situation in Ahiara Diocese to the best of my knowledge has not improved. **Most importantly, this has been threatening my spiritual life.**

Taking the above into consideration, **I am convinced, in conscience that my remaining the Bishop of Ahiara is no longer beneficial to the Church.** I do not think that my apostolate in a diocese where a group of priests and lay faithful are very ill disposed to have me in their midst would be effective. **Exercising the ministry in a diocese where priests who are supposed to be my immediate and closest collaborators, brothers, friends and sons are at**

war with one another, with the laity and with me as their chief shepherd would be disastrous and a threat to salvation of souls – including my own soul.

I therefore present my resignation from the office of Bishop of Ahiara which I consider the only proper option now to facilitate re-evangelisation of the faithful of the diocese especially the priests now that you and your collaborators in the Roman Curia can now decipher priests who actually affirmed their loyalty to the Holy Father and those who decided to bow out of the Catholic Church in disobedience. I hope this will also secure healing for me.

YOUR HOLINESS, FOR THE SPIRITUAL GOOD OF THE DIOCESE, I, MOST REV. PETER EBERE OKPALEKE, HEREBY FREELY AND HUMBLY PRESENT, MY RESIGNATION TO YOU AND PRAY THAT YOU RELIEVE ME OF THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BEING THE BISHOP OF AHIARA DIOCESE OF NIGERIA.

Please, permit me to categorically state that if it still pleases God and the Holy Father, I am still well disposed to serve God and the Church in any other area of assignment.

Once more, I express my gratitude to God and to you, our dear Holy Father for giving me the opportunity to serve in my unworthiness.

While renewing my fidelity and obedience to you, I humbly request for your blessings.

Your Son,

Most Rev. Peter Ebere Okpaleke
Bishop of Ahiara