



CONGREGATIO
PRO GENTIUM EVANGELIZATIONE

PROT. 180/18 (1)

19 February 2018

Your Eminence,

The lamentable case of the Diocese of Ahiara and, in particular, the irresponsible and obstinate attitude assumed by some of her priests, who systematically rejected the appointment of His Excellency the Most Rev. Peter Ebere Okpaleke as their Bishop, deeply saddened the Holy Father and, with Him, the whole Church in Nigeria. The Bishop, after more than five years since his appointment and for the good of the Church, decided to present his resignation to the Holy Father, who has continued to encourage and remain close to him. At this time, the Supreme Pontiff, taking note of this noble gesture, wishes to show Bishop Okpaleke esteem and appreciation as a priest of Jesus Christ and Bishop of the Church.

When the Pope accepted the resignation of Bishop Okpaleke from the Pastoral care of Ahiara and appointed a new Apostolic Administrator, the mandate of Your Eminence, conferred on the 3rd of July in the year 2013, also came to a close. I would like, therefore, in the name of the Holy Father, to sincerely thank you, the Vicar delegate, Msgr. Clement Okechukwu Ebii, and your other collaborators for your kind generosity in taking Pastoral care of Ahiara, in spite of your many pastoral commitments, and for your patience throughout these years.

Moreover, with the appointment of a new Apostolic Administrator, the Holy Father wants to point out that He continues to have a special and particular concern for the Diocese of Ahiara. Likewise, the Roman Pontiff is entrusting its ordinary administration to a trusted Prelate of a nearby Diocese, capable of initiating the process of healing and renewal. This means that, for the time being, the Pope does not intend to provide normal Governance to Ahiara and reserves the right to evaluate its spiritual and ecclesial progress before He makes another decision.

I once again entrust the future of Ahiara to your prayers and wisdom, which in these years has become dear to your Pastoral heart.

May the Lord reward you for all you have done. With many thanks, I remain

Fraternally yours in Christ,

His Eminence
John O. Cardinal ONAIYEKAN
Archbishop of Abuja

NIGERIA