

Anglican Primate, Okoh, Harps on Essence of Holy pilgrimage

Governments at all levels in Nigeria have been told that sending pilgrims to the Holy Land should not be turned into political patronage. Rather, they were enjoined to note that the whole essence of the yearly pilgrimage exercise was purely a spirituality affair that should not be toyed with.

The Chairman of the National Christian Pilgrim Commission who is also the Primate of the Anglican Communion, Bishop Nicholas Okoh gave the charge during a courtesy call on Ondo State Government, Dr. Olusegun Mimiko in Akure on Wednesday.

According to him, “the essence of pilgrimage is spirituality; it is to transform people and to enable those in government to perform the job of governance successfully. Some of those who go on pilgrimage do not even understand its essence because it is a spiritual thing.

Okay who commended the Mimiko government for its positive contributions to successful pilgrimage by pilgrims from Ondo State advocated an increase in its slot from 550 to over 750 pilgrims from the state this year.

The Chairman disclosed that the Commission recorded zero abscondment during the last pilgrimage which he attributed to water tight screening exercise carried out by the body.

In his remarks, Dr. Mimiko extolled the sterling qualities of Primate Okoh in the handling of pilgrimage in Nigeria which noted had led to the rapid improvement being witnessed in the annual exercise.

According to him: “with these economic challenges in this country, it is a no mean achievement that out of over 17,000 pilgrims, we never recorded a single case of abscondment.

“We, on our part as government, want to assure you that we shall do our best to see that the essence of pilgrimage which is spirituality is not defeated because if the wrong people are sent to the Holy Land, certainly there will be no gain on such investment.

“Our own Christian Pilgrim Board will get Christian organizations involved actively in the selection of those going to pilgrimage next time,” the governor assured.

Dr. Mimiko, however, attributed the absence of inter-religious conflict in Ondo State to the harmonious relationship that exists among the people and the maturity of religious leaders in the state.