

Episcopal Ordination of 2nd Bishop of Bauchi diocese, Nigeria



Our photo shows Most Rev Augustine Kasujja (Apostolic Nuncio), Rt Rev James Daman (Shendam), the new Bishop, HE Cardinal Keith O'Brien of St Andrews & Edinburgh, Rt Rev Charles Hammawa (Jalingo) and Rt Rev Matthew Ishaya Audu (Lafia).

Following his appointment by Pope Benedict XVI on 18 March 2011, Rt Rev Malachy John Goltok was ordained as Bishop of Bauchi diocese, Nigeria on Thursday, 19 May 2011 in a colourful outdoor celebration in the grounds of the Immaculate Conception Secondary School, Bauchi. The school was founded by Fr Fergus Tuohy SMA (from Cork City).

The new bishop, born in 1965, was ordained for the diocese of Jos on 4 November 1990 by then Bishop Gabriel G Ganaka (RIP). In 1995 Jos became an Archdiocese and on 5 July 1996 the Vicariate Apostolic of Bauchi was carved out from the new archdiocese.

Rt Rev John Moore SMA (from Dublin) was appointed as Vicar Apostolic on 5 July 1996. Bauchi became a diocese on 31 December 2003 with Bishop Moore at its head. He died, after a brief illness, on 20 January 2010 at the age of 68 years.

Bishop Goltok takes charge of a vast diocese covering 64,605 sq kms with less than 2% of its population Catholic (about 70,000 Catholics). The largest religious group are Muslim. Sadly, there have been many clashes between Muslim and Christian groups due to the presence in the area of some Muslim sects who seek to cause disunity and violence as they pursue their own fundamentalist agenda. Political problems are also a feature of life in this part of Nigeria. The violence of April 2011 saw 16 Catholic churches burnt down throughout the diocese, all of them built during the episcopacy of the Bishop Moore SMA.

At present there are 40 priests ministering in the 22 parishes of the diocese (34 diocesan, 3 each from the SMA and SPS). Three Presentation Brothers teach in a school in Tafawa Balewa. The eight Sisters ministering in the diocese come from Holy Child Congregation (4), Our Lady of the Apostles – OLA (3) and one Sister of St Louis. With 8 major seminarians preparing for the priesthood, Bauchi looks forward with confidence to the future.



The principal Consecrator was His Eminence Keith Cardinal O'Brien, Archbishop of St Andrews & Edinburgh assisted by Rt Rev James Naanman Daman OSA, Bishop of Shendam and Rt Rev Charles M Hammawa, Bishop of Jalingo. In the background, on right, is Fr John Keane SMA (Milltown, Co Kerry).

The moment of Episcopal Ordination with the laying on of hands by Cardinal O'Brien on Bishop Goltok.

