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Nigerian diocese opposes bishop appointment

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NCR Today

Priests and laity of a Nigerian diocese are openly opposing the Vatican's selection of a new bishop.

In a six-page statement and in a demonstration in the city of Mbaise, the appointment of Msgr. Ebere Peter Okpalaeke, who comes from another diocese, was repudiated as a contradiction of "natural justice ... and a reprehensible signal about the status and reputation of the 500 Catholic priests who trace their origin to the soils of Mbaise, a diocese that has been acclaimed the Ireland of Nigeria."

The statement noted that the opposition has nothing personal against the appointee, "but we strongly contest his suitability for Ahiara Diocese, given its uniqueness and pastoral realities."

It's far too early to draw any conclusions from this uprising except to note that it mirrors the legendary and long-ignored saying of the fifth-century pope, Celestine I: "A bishop should never be sent to a people who do not want him."

The full story is here.

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