

Getting to Know Fr. Akor

I am Rev Fr. Joseph Akor Lanko who is from Niger state, the north central part of Nigeria. I lost my parents at the age of six and was raised by my adopted mum and dad. I have been a priest for fourteen (14) years; ordained July 19, 2008 for the Catholic Diocese of Minna. I have worked in various parishes in the diocese and other offices. I was chaplain to the Federal Polytechnic Bida, the immediate past dean of Bida Deanery and immediate past communication director. I was a summer student of licentiate in Sacred Theology (STL) at Sacred Heart Seminary, Detroit. I came from being the pastor of St. Mary Catholic Church, Suleja, Nigeria, diocesan chaplain of the Divine Mercy, deanery chaplain of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and the Lay Evangelizers.

St. Mary parish has over five hundred families and has over two thousand parishioners. The parish has over twenty different pious societies and organizations, such as Catholic Men Organization, Catholic Women Organization, Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria, Legion of Mary, Blue Army, Block Rosary Crusade, Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Catholic Biblical Movement, Catholic Widow's Organization and many others approved by the competent authority of the universal church.

The parish has a "struggling to survive" primary school with over two hundred pupils made up of Catholics and non Catholics, including Muslims. The enthusiastic and vibrant youth are the strength and future of the parish and the church in Nigeria. The youth constitute over 70 percent of the population.

The Northern part of Nigeria is a Muslim dominated area. There is a security challenge in the northern part of Nigeria as a result of Boko Haram terrorist and herdsmen attacks. This has an adverse effect on the many youth, who are jobless. Many of the youth are being recruited for terrorism and different crimes. Again, as a result of the attacks, the pressure of assisting the victims and the poor has shifted to the church.

St. Mary has two Masses daily. Four Masses on Sundays: 6am, 8am, 10am and 6pm. I went to the office from Tuesday to Friday. Other activities include empowering the youth through skill acquisition and providing scholarship to the victims of violence and the poor and less privileged.

My hobbies include playing tennis, badminton, watching soccer, singing and listening to music. I have a musical album titled "God is still in Charge". What I love most is living for God and others; proclaiming and sharing with people the unfathomable divine mercy of God, the boundless love of God and the immense and immeasurable joy and fulfilment of belonging to Jesus.

Keep in Mind.

I. Jesus loves you so dearly.

II. The most precious moment in your life is the moment you spend in his presence, abide therefore in his presence.

III. Don't give up, God is still in charge no matter the situation.

IV. Imbibe the attitude of gratitude