

MEET THE PRIESTS

Fr. Emmanuel Akalue

Priest



Father Emmanuel Chukwunwike is from Nigeria, West Africa. He hails from Ezi in Aniocha North Local Government Area (i.e County) of Delta State. Father Emmanuel is from the Diocese of Issele-Uku in the Delta State in Nigeria. Providentially, his home town Ezi, in the Diocese of Issele-Uku, produced the First Catholic Priest in West Africa; namely, the late Fr Paul Emechete [Born in 1888, ordained priest in 1920 (*the Year of the birth of Pope John Paull II*) and died in 1948].

Father Emmanuel attended the Major Seminary of Saints Peter and Paul Bodija-Ibadan (Oyo State, Nigeria) where he studied for the priesthood. At the completion of his training, he was named Best Seminary Student of the Year for 1994, an award instituted by the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria (Lagos Province). He was ordained a deacon on December 26, 1993, and ordained a priest on August 20, 1994.

Fr Emmanuel originally came to the USA in 2002. He majored in Theology and Catechetics at the Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio. Father spent one summer visiting at Our Lady of Grace Church in Palm Bay. In 2004, Father then joined the Diocese of Orlando and was appointed Parochial Vicar at St. Jude Catholic Church in Ocala, Florida. In August 2005, Father Emmanuel returned to Nigeria and served as Pastor at St. Brigid's Catholic Church in Asaba. In October, 2006, Father Emmanuel returned to the United States, to the Diocese of Orlando, as Parochial Vicar at St. James Cathedral. On July 1st 2008, he was appointed Parochial Administrator ("Pastor") of St. John the Baptist Catholic Community, Dunnellon. He is also the Coordinator for the African Catholic Community in Orlando Diocese.

Fr Emmanuel has a deep love and unquestionable conviction for the Teachings of Jesus Christ and his Church as found in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. He loves organizing Bible Studies Programs and Doctrinal Teachings. Among his remarkable mentors are St. Paul Apostle, St. Augustine of Hippo, St. Bernard of Clairvaux (his ordination patron saint and the principal 'player' in the 12th Century Church), St. Francis of Assisi (who received the vision: 'Go and Rebuild my Church which is falling into ruins), St. Padre Pio, St. Faustina Maria Kowalska, Pope John Paul II (for the New Evangelization) and Pope Benedict XVI (for clarity of the presentations of the mysteries of our faith). His late father, Damian Daniel Akalue was instrumental to his love for praying of the Psalms (his favorite prayer) and committing some Psalms and other prayers to memory.

Since his ordination, he has served as Director, Emmaus School of Catholic Evangelization (the Mother School of Evangelization in Nigeria), Diocesan Secretary and Chancellor of Issele-Uku Diocese, and as Pastor, Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Community, Onicha-Olona and St. Brigid's Catholic Church in Asaba. He also served as Chaplain and Director in various pastoral capacities: Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Nigeria (Issele-Uku Diocese), Delta State Catholic Youth Corp Members, Diocesan Education Commission and the Diocesan Pastoral Center. And he worked as a member in various commissions especially the Biblical Commission and the Inculturation Commission.

Father Emmanuel's hobbies include reading, writing, painting (Fine Arts), and playing tennis. He published a Book, "The True Church of Christ - A Theological Discernment of God's Will for His Church" in 2006. He has a mother figure - Mrs Lotte Glasscock at Ocala in Florida.

Fr. Kevin MacGabhann

Retired Priest



Fr. Kevin was born of the late Seamus MacGabhann & Evelyn Burn in Dublin, Ireland.

He was ordained on June 13, 1963 at St. John's Cathedral in Waterford, Ireland. He came to the USA where he served as a priest in the Diocese of Palm Beach, Florida. He served there for many years before he retired around 2001. He is now residing in Dunnellon and has been assisting the parish of St. John the Baptist with the liturgy celebrations since 2004.

Fr. Kevin introduced St. John's with the very first Variety Show "Gales of Laughter" in April 2005, where parishioners enjoy an evening of laughter, music, dance and the company of friends. It is proudly produced, directed and cast by St. John's own parishioners! The show has been a tradition here ever since.