



Fr. Hyacinth Chiuba Okafor, CM

Fr. Hyacinth was born on October 31, 1958 in Jos Plateau State, Nigeria. He received his primary and secondary education in Nigeria, after which he worked as an auxiliary teacher and taught West African history and Integrated Science. In 1979 he was chosen to join the Congregation of the Mission, Vincentians. He went through the seminary formation starting with the novitiate, philosophy and theological studies before his temporary deaconate ordination in 1987 and priestly ordination in 1988 all in the Archdiocese of Onitsha.

Fr. Hyacinth's first assignment was Vocation and Postulant Director, which includes recruitment and formation of candidates for the Vincentian vocation to priesthood or Vincentian brother. He combined the work with preaching parish missions and retreats. Later, he was sent to Ireland for further study in pastoral leadership and counselling. He had training in Ignatian Spirituality, Exercises and Programme, at St Benus, North Wales, UK. He obtained his Master's degree in Pastoral Studies and Leadership from All Hallows College, Dublin, Ireland.

Following this, he returned to Nigeria and was appointed Director of Catechetics and Pastoral Leadership Training in the dioceses of Makurdi and later Otukpo Benue State. He began and developed the current Pastoral Leadership and Training Centre now serving Otukpo Diocese. In 1996 he was transferred to Enugu Theological Formation House as the Director and Superior. He was the Vice Provincial Econome, also the Parish Priest of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, Maryland, Enugu Diocese.

He continued all these assignments with the collaboration of his confreres until 2001 when he was sent for further studies in the United States.

In the United states, Fr. Hyacinth obtained his second Master's degree in Mental Health Counselling from Xavier University, Louisiana in 2003. He was appointed Pastoral Administrator of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church, Jennings, Louisiana. He combined pastoral work and his studies for a while, then continued to pursue his professional license in Counseling and completing the Doctoral degree (PhD) in Counselor Educator from the University of New Orleans, Louisiana.

Following his time in the US, Fr. Hyacinth returned to Nigeria and lectured as a Core Team Member in the Institute for Formation in Jos, Plateau State for two years. He helped to update the entire program of the Institute and provide a solution for stability and progress of the Institution. Later he moved to the United Kingdom and served as the Catholic Chaplain in Kings College Hospital, London for three years, following which he returned to Nigeria to engage in the work of Initial Formation of candidates for the Vincentians. He was appointed as Parish Priest of St. Kizito Catholic Church, Kuje, Archdiocese of Abuja, Nigeria. He worked in the Parish for four years before coming to Canada in the Archdiocese of Regina early this year 2023.