

## MANY PASTORAL CHANGES

Msgr. Jack served the parish until he was succeeded by Fr. Frank V. du Preez in April 2009. Fr. Frank was also appointed pastor of St. Patrick's in North Little Rock.

Parishioners were also in for another major change. Sisters Carol and Sylvia made the decision to move to their motherhouse in Chatawa, Mississippi. They had been the anchor for the parish for 25 years. Sister Carol had served as director of the St. Augustine Center for Children for 18 years. Sister Sylvia served as business manager of the parish, overseeing the maintenance, finances, and liturgy. They both sang in the Gospel choir. A special banquet to mark Sister Carol's 50th anniversary as a member of the School Sisters of Notre Dame and a farewell to both was held on October 24, 2009, at St. Patrick's Church in North Little Rock. These wonderful, dedicated, and hardworking sisters would be sorely missed by the St. Augustine's parish family and the daycare.

With the increasing shortage of priests in the United States, Archbishop Anthony Obinna of the Archdiocese of Owerri, Nigeria, loaned The Diocese of Little Rock two priests, one of which was Father Bartholomew "Bart" Okere.

Seeing a growing number of African priests in the dioceses and the community, Fr. Bart began hosting the Igbo Mass on the third Sunday of the month. Igbo (pronounced EE-boo), is both a Nigerian tribe and its language.

In 2012, Fr. Bart was transferred to Tennessee, and Fr. Francis Damoah, SVD from Ghana became the newest pastor of St. Augustine. He was officially installed in June of 2014. During that year, Fr. Francis initiated the Campaign 85 fundraising drive in conjunction with the 85th church anniversary. Monies raised helped the church pay for much-needed repairs around the church and the vacant daycare. Block parties, raffles, and a garage sale were also planned. Jeanne Baltz designed an Acadia



Igbo Mass: Fr. Bart introduced the Igbo Mass in 2010. Igbo is both a Nigerian tribe and language.

Tree inside the front wall entrance of the church, allowing parishioners to purchase a leaf with their inscribed name for \$500. Bishop Anthony Taylor was on hand in 2015 to bless and break ground for the first ever church marquee sign and the Blessing of the Grotto by the parish office.

On June 1, 2018, Bishop Anthony Taylor appointed Fr. Leon Ngandu, SVD, pastor of St. Augustine. Fr. Leon was no stranger to the church as he served as associate pastor for a short time in 2014. His young and energetic spirit was quickly embraced by the church. He changed the Mass time from 11:30 am to 10:30. He organized a spiritual retreat for members and a two-day advent revival with St. Bartholomew within the first six months of his arrival. UAMS Headstart program leased the old daycare, bringing in additional revenue for the church. On September 7, 2019, Fr.



Marquee: St. Augustine builds its first ever marquee on the corner of the church parking lot in 2016.

Leon was officially installed as pastor of both St. Augustine and St. Bartholomew parishes. In addition to his duties as pastor, Fr. Leon serves as chaplain and bible teacher at Mount St. Mary High School.