

May 26, 2005

Archbishop Brian Usanga



Archbishop Usanga was born Oct. 24, 1928 in Obotim, Nigeria. He was ordained Dec. 8, 1956, after studies at the Bigard Pontifical Seminary at Enugu. In 1961, he was accepted as a transfer student at St. Mary of the Plains College in Dodge City.

Bishop Forst appointed him assistant to the college chaplain. He completed his bachelor of arts degree in philosophy and graduated with honors in 1961.

He went on to earn a master's degree from St. Louis University and had completed his course work for a doctorate in anthropology at Catholic University when he was named bishop in 1966.

He was ordained by Archbishop Luigi Bellotti at Christ the King Church, Uyo, East Nigeria on Dec. 4, 1966. He served Calabar, Nigeria as auxiliary bishop; the Nigerian Catholic Bishops' Conference as Secretary; and Secretary General of the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, before succeeding Bishop James Moynaugh as ordinary in 1970.

St. Mary of the Plains College recognized him with the Outstanding Alumni Award in 1973.

Pope John Paul II raised the Diocese of Calabar to an archdiocese in 1994, and appointed Bishop Usanga as its first metropolitan. The pallium investiture by His Holiness took place June 29, 1994, at the Vatican. He retired Dec. 17, 2003, after reaching the canonical age of retirement.

Archbishop Usanga was in Rome for medical treatment when he died May 26, 2005. He was 77. Archbishop John Onaiyekan of Abuja celebrated the funeral Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Calabar. Archbishop Usanga was buried in a crypt at the cathedral.