

PROFILE OF THE RT. REV. JAMES AFOLABI POPOOLA

Birth:

The Rt. Rev. James Afolabi Popoola was born on 20th November 1949 into the family of the late Mr. Isaac Popoola and Mrs. Rebecca Popoola at Ibara Orile, Abeokuta, Ogun State. His father now of blessed memory hailed from Ibarapa township of Abeokuta and his mother also of blessed memory from Ibara township of Abeokuta.

Education:

He attended St. Mary Primary School, Asalu, Abeokuta from 1955 - 1960 and obtained First School Leaving Certificate. He proceeded to Methodist Secondary Modern School, Asero, Abeokuta in 1961 and passed Secondary Modern School Examination in 1963. He later sat for and passed General Certificate of Examination (London) and passed five O/L Papers with credit. In 1979, he obtained first Degree B.A.(Hon's) Religious Studies and M.A. Degree 1984, all at the University of Ibadan having first obtained Diploma in Religious Studies in 1974.

For his Theological Education, he attended:

- 1) Vining Christian Leadership Training Centre, Akure from 1967 to 1970 for Catechist Training.
- 2) Immanuel College of Theology, Ibadan from 1972 – 1975 for Ordination Course. He was made a Deacon in 1975 and subsequently Priested in 1976 at St. James' Cathedral, Oke Bola, Ibadan by the Most Rev. T.O.Olufosoye. At Immanuel College, he was the Senior Student (President) in his final year and won many prizes at the end of the course.
At the University of Ibadan, he graduated with Second Class, Upper Division.
- 3) In 1991, he went abroad and had a study tour of English Cathedrals. (Church of England)
- 4) In 2001, he attended Bishops' Training at Malawi under the sponsorship of C.A.P.A.

Working Experience:

Since the beginning of his Ministry, he has served in the following Parishes:

- St. Peters Church, Ilewo Igbele; Ebenezer Church, Olokuta; St. John's Church, Ajilete; all in Yewa Diocese. After his ordination, he served at St. James' Cathedral, Oke Bola, Ibadan; St. Matthias Church, Orogun in Ibadan Diocese.
- After his University Education, he served the nation under National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) at Ogori Magogo Teachers College, Kwara State. And then after the Youth Service Year, he served at Holy Trinity Church, Ikereku, Abeokuta; Christ Anglican Church, Iporo Ake, Abeokuta and as Provost at St. Peters' Cathedral, Ake from 1990 – 2000.
- He was Synod Secretary from 1987 – July 2000.
- He was the Second Chairman, Board of Governors of Omolaja Sodipo Memorial Grammar School, Abeokuta.
- He also taught briefly at Rev. Kuti Memorial Grammar School, Abeokuta and Ogun State Polytechnic now Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Abeokuta.
- In July 30th 2000, he was consecrated **BISHOP** for Osun Diocese and enthroned on 1st August, 2000.

Achievements as Provost (1990 – 2000):

- As Provost of St. Peters Cathedral, Abeokuta, he initiated the founding of some societies including Light of Christ Society.
- He introduced Tithing with series of teachings
- He started St. Peter's Private Nursery/Primary School, using the ground floor of the Clergy House and also started work on the permanent site.
- He planted St. Michael's Anglican Church, Obantoko, Abeokuta and the Church building was completed in his tenure as Provost.
- He introduced "Feast of Dedication Celebration" and sustained it.
- He introduced Mid-Week Fellowship and Vigil Prayers.
- At St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Ibara, he is a member of Light of Christ Society and Egbe Alufa.. He is equally a member of St. Luke's Church, Ibara Orile.

Achievements as Bishop:

- The Rt. Rev. James Afolabi Popoola has shown very keen interest in Evangelism since he was enthroned as Bishop of Osun Diocese.
- A School of Evangelism was established to train voluntary lay evangelists who were commissioned to assist ordained Ministers for evangelistic outreaches.
- From 2000- 2013; 56 (fifty-six) New Churches have been planted.
- He introduced and has sustained the Annual evangelistic crusade tagged “Jesus Carnival” since 2001. While Parish Churches are encouraged to hold Vigil regularly, a Diocesan Vigil is held quarterly at the Cathedral Church of All Saints, Osogbo
- Many new Churches have been planted in different parts of the Diocese. The annual reports to the Synod show the number of converts from the Islamic faith and traditional worship.
- In the field of Education, the Diocesan Comprehensive High School established by his predecessor and in the second year when he resumed work in 2000, grew tremendously until it was handed over to **Osun North Diocese**
- In 2001, he convinced the Diocese to embark on the construction of a Diocesan Conference Centre which can seat up to 1,000 people. The building has been further extended at the time of writing this profile.
- The Diocese embarked on the development of Diocesan Camp Ground at Ilobu, Osun State where the Diocesan Jesus Carnival was held for the first time in November 2, 2013.
- He also introduced the yearly Free Eye Mission and medical care for the members of the Diocese. This has been sustained since 2003.
- In Sept. 2001, he also established a new Diocesan Nursery/Primary School at the Diocesan Bishops court, Isale Aro, Osogbo. The School is now 15 (fifteen) years old.
- Under him, the Diocese started an Oil Palm Plantation and gradually developed every year until it was released to **Osun North East Diocese**.
- In 2003, a School of Church Music was established with the first set of students graduating on 18th June 2005. The School has trained many Church Organists.
- In September 2008 a new Anglican Grammar School was started with 54 students. (John McKay Anglican Grammar School, Osogbo.) The School graduated the first set of students in 2014 with very good NECO and WASCE results.
- In 2010, the Diocese of Osun was led by him to establish a Table Water Project called “**AQUADOS**”. The project was properly registered by NAFDAC and approved by S.O.N (Standard Organisation of Nigeria) as one of the best Table Water in Nigeria.
- He established the following N.G.O’s duly registered with Corporate Affairs Commission.
 - Social and Economic Foundation of Osun Anglican Diocese –SEDEFOD
 - Dorcas Foundation of Osun Anglican Diocese
- He established “Fellows of Osun Anglican Diocese” now known and called Nehemiah Fellows of Osun Anglican Diocese
- He introduced Diocesan Harvest to fund Evangelism in the Diocese.
- He established the Diocesan Clergy Cooperative Society (CICS) which has enabled some clergy to own their own houses and train their children.

His Philosophy of Life:

Bishop Popoola’s philosophy is to be at peace with everybody – to play his part well and leave the stage better than he met it. He encourages everybody including his Priests to be at peace with God and their neighbours. His hobbies include, farming, reading and listening to gospel music. He strongly believes that God who called him is faithful and desires to serve Him faithfully to the end.

Bishop Popoola is happily married to Beatrice Titilayo Oluremi and their marriage in 1981 is blessed with children and grand children
TO GOD BE THE GLORY