

Fr. Arthur Carragher CSSp, 1922–2011

“*Kedu?*” This short word opened up a long relationship between a young priest and a one-time missionary in Nigeria. The year Fr. Arthur left St. Patrick’s parish in Obolle-eke was the year I was born.

What interested me, the young priest, is that “*kedu?*” (how are you?) is the local greeting my people use when they meet each other. As our friendship grew I came to realize that Fr. Arthur had picked up many expressions of my local language: “*I am fine,*” “*I am hungry/thirsty,*” “*what is your name,*” etc. He remembered the names of most of the towns in the parish. He played for me some of the tricks with coins and cards that he had used to entertain the children in schools.

Fr. Arthur told me stories of his ministry in this rural and difficult Obollo-Eke parish. In 1952, it was one of only three parishes in what later came to be Nsukka diocese. There weren’t many cars then, and the missionaries traveled mainly on motorcycles and bicycles. Most of the time, the distances ranged from twelve to twenty miles. Three quarters of the journey the bicycle would carry the priest, and the other quarter the priest would carry the bicycle. There were also rivers, streams and brooks to cross to the next mission station.



One of the stories Fr. Arthur told me was about his experience on a particular trek to a mission town, Agudene, about fourteen miles from the parish house. He had to cross the Amanyi river on a bicycle. Everything went fine till about one third of the journey back home.

Fr. Arthur was totally exhausted, riding through the rugged terrains of the towns and villages. He barely made it to the town square at Ogbodu Aba where he literally collapsed.

The young men immediately rallied around him. He was no stranger to any of them. One of them hurriedly climbed a coconut tree, felled down some of the heads, cut them open, and gave the milk to Fr. Arthur. With the strength from that coconut milk Fr. Arthur rode another six miles to his parish home.

He later recalled, “That milk gave me a new life and spirit.”

Years later in Canada, as we talked about his missionary activities, he told me, “You know, David, I left my energy in Africa.”

I am privileged to have known Fr. Arthur as a priest and confrere, and more so as a minister in my home parish. I represent all the people of those parishes in giving thanks to God for the gift of this great missionary. May God grant him eternal rest now in his Kingdom.

— Fr. David E. Okenji CSSp

TransCanada Jubilarians

2010

Ordination

70 years Ted Colleton
60 years Arthur Carragher
Edward Graham
Frank McCabe
50 Years Gerald FitzGerald
John Geary

Profession

60 years Enzo Agnoli
Michael Doyle
John Geary
Matthew Grogan
50 years Peter Wayow
25 years Grzegorz Makowski

2011

Ordination

60 years John Cunningham
50 Years Dermot Doran
Francis Laverty

Profession

60 years Patrick Doran
William McCormack
50 years Joseph Kelly
25 years Robert Colburn
Alexander Osei

Lay Spiritan honoured

Congratulations to Dr. George Webster, Lay Spiritan, who received the 2010 Lifetime Achievement Award of the Canadian Bioethics Society. “The award is given annually to an individual whose demonstrated scholarship and leadership has contributed significantly to health care ethics in Canada.”

George is ethics consultant, researcher and educator with the Catholic Health Association of Manitoba.



Photo: Tom Fulton