

## SEND-FORTH FOR REV. FR. RICHARD ENGBUMA

The Parish of St. Joachim- St. John the Evangelist was agog with celebrations on Sunday March 25, 2007. It was a good-bye to Fr. Richard Enegbuma who was returning to Nigeria after his one-year service in the Church. The good-bye ceremony began at 2.00 pm with a Mass said by Fr. Richard and concelebrated by the Pastor, Fr. David Nolan, the assisting Priests, Fr. Fabian Eghiabumhe, Fr. Irenaeus Ikhane, and five other Nigerian Priests. During the homily, Rev. Fr. Charles Imokhai who was a teacher of Fr. Richard in High School lauded the sterling qualities of Fr. Richard. He described him as an obedient, committed and dedicated Priest. He thanked the Pastor and Parishioners for the wonderful reception and support they gave to Fr. Richard. He prayed God to bless them and make the Parish grow from strength to strength.

After the prayer after Communion, the Pastor Fr. David Nolan thanked Fr. Richard for his dedicated service to the Parish. He said Fr. Richard has contributed to improving the life of the Parish and impacted positively in the lives of the Parishioners with his inspiring and thought-provoking sermons. Fr. Richard, he said, will be dearly missed by the Priests and Parishioners and prayed God to continue to bless and strengthen him in his Priestly ministry.

On her part, the Mayor of Beacon, Clara Lou-Gould presented an address on behalf of the City of Beacon. She said Fr. Richard did not only touch the lives of the Parishioners but the people of Beacon in general. As a mark of honour for his dedicated service, she declared March 25 every year as a day for Fr. Richard in Beacon.

Highlight of the Eucharistic celebration was the special thanksgiving in which Fr. Richard, joined by all the Priests, Parishioners and friends, danced to the Altar and offered gifts to God.

After the Mass, there was entertainment and refreshment at the Church hall. It was another round of celebration. Nigeria local music was played and many accompanied Fr. Richard to dance on the floor. The Chairman of the Parish Pastoral Council, Engineer Joseph Guarneri on behalf of the Parish thanked Fr. Richard for accepting to work in the Parish and for his dedicated service. He asked him to convey their thanks and appreciation to the Bishop when he gets home.

Responding, Fr. Richard was full of thanks and appreciation to the Pastor and Parishioners. He said he enjoyed relative peace while in the Parish. He described the Pastor, Fr. David Nolan as a fine Priest and a rare gem. Adding that he enjoyed working with the Pastor who he also described as a good administrator, he enjoined the Parishioners to cooperate with him for the growth and development of the Parish. While thanking the Mayor, Clara Lou Gould for the honour bestowed on him, he said Beacon is now his second home.

Fr. Richard is a Priest of the Catholic Diocese of Auch, Nigeria. He was ordained on March 15, 1980. After his Silver Jubilee as a Priest, he came to Beacon in March 2006. He has since returned to Nigeria, to his home Diocese of Auch.