



Donald Llewelyn Bookal

Donald Bookal was born and raised in Kingston, Jamaica in the West Indies, and was educated there at Kingston College. After graduating in 1958, he worked as a shipping officer until emigrating to the United States in 1965, where he continued his education, and for thirty years worked in the oil and chemical industries, retiring in 1999. He continued to serve the industry as an advisor to the U.S. Department of Transportation, and in consultation across Central and South American and in the Caribbean.

Donald was a long-time member and leader at Saint Luke's Church in the Bronx, for over forty years as the Parish Administrator and as Executive Director of the parish's Senior Community Program Food Pantry and Soup Kitchen. But beyond the walls of his own parish, he was also the President of the Brotherhood of Saint Andrew New York Assembly, Vice-Chair of the Bronx Council, and a member for over forty years of the Union of Black Episcopalians. He was also a leader in the East Bronx Inter-Parish Council and the African Network Committee. Donald chaired our Companion Relationship with the Diocese of Matsolane in South Africa, as well as the Carpenter's Kids Project in the Diocese of Central Tanganyika. He was a member as well of the NAACP, Bronx Chapter.

In many ways, Donald was the principal lay leader among our two dozen Bronx parishes, and was the organizing authority for the annual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration and Bronx Council Scholarships each January. His leadership was so ubiquitous in the Bronx and in our diocese, that it sent a tremor across our churches when he succumbed to the Coronavirus pandemic. He became ill in the very first wave of the pandemic in New York and died of the virus on April 7, 2020 at the age of 83, at the height of the spring surge which covered New York City in trauma and loss. Donald's own parish of Saint Luke's lost over fifteen people, victims of the Covid pandemic.

We are pleased at this convention to remember and honor a life spent in service to his God, his parish, his community, and our larger global mission field, over six decades. He exemplifies the Faithful Departed for whom we offer our daily prayers. But as one of the early victims of pandemic, we remember him today also as one by whose memory he may stand for us in representation of the dozens of victims of Covid in our parishes, and the thousands upon thousands of our fellow Americans. Therefore, in recognition and gratitude for his life and service in our midst, for his years of faithful self-offering, offered to the glory of God, and in honor of the many among us who, like Donald, fell before pandemic scourge, we, on this 13th day of November 2021, in the tenth year of our consecration, do award him, posthumously,

The Bishop's Cross

The Right Reverend Andrew ML Dietsche
XVI Bishop of New York