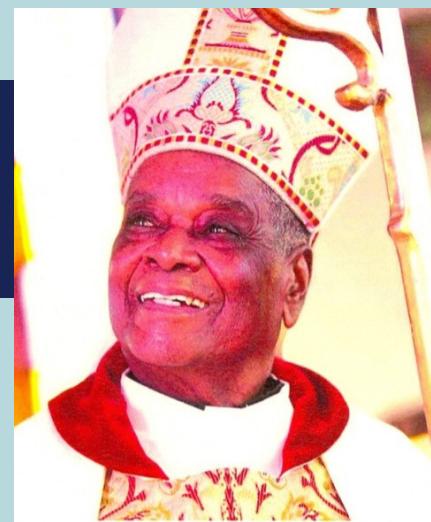


Vincent Millard Waterman

Patriarch Vincent 1, African Orthodox Church



Vincent Waterman was enthroned Patriarch Vincent 1 of the African Orthodox Church in October 2015. He was born in Hilaby, St Andrew on the island of Barbados in the Caribbean in 1926. Vincent, affectionately known to his family as "Garvey," went on to serve as a Priest and Community Leader in the United States and Canada.

As a teenager, Vincent Waterman migrated to the United States in search of opportunities to advance himself. He worked for the Brooklyn Gas Company and became the first Black Meter Reader, rising within the ranks and retiring in 1983. In the context of personal challenges Vincent found strength through his faith in God and inspiration from the speeches of leaders in the Black Community such as Marcus Garvey, Martin Luther King Junior and Malcolm X. He trained for Ministry at the Enrich Theological Seminary and was ordained to the Priesthood in 1964. He then went on to serve at the Holy Cross Pro-Cathedral African Orthodox Church in New York. Waterman was elevated to Archpriest, Bishop, Archbishop and finally to the position of Patriarch.

His forty-seven-year marriage to Isabel Francis, Nurse and Deacon in the church, was the foundation of a rich partnership in Ministry and joyful family relationships. Vincent was beloved family member and confidante to his daughters, Yvette, Victoria and Frances. His grandchildren are Vincent, Tevin, Nevaeh and Evander. In 1983 after the death of Isabel's father Rev. George Anthony Francis, the longest serving Priest of the St. Phillip's African Orthodox Church, Vincent became the congregation's Rector. He and his wife laboured in Sydney for 33 years, serving people within and beyond the walls of the church. They renovated the church building and initiated programmes such as a Caribbean Festival which enjoyed support from community. He was known for his humour, commitment to justice and as a compassionate Priest who cared for those who were sick and experiencing difficulties.



Drawing by Sydney Artist Robyn Martelly

Patriarch Vincent 1 served as Chaplain of the Royal Canadian Legion's Branch 28, Cape Breton Naval Veterans Association and as Board member of The Black United Front, the Nova Scotia Human Rights. On his ninetieth birthday, Vincent Waterman was made an Honorary Inspector for the Cape Breton Regional Police Service. Other recognition given to Vincent included the Tom Miller Humanitarian Award; and upon his death the Cape Breton Regional Municipality paid a Memorial Tribute to him. Under the signatures of Councillor Jim MacLeod and Mayor Cecil Clarke, the tribute read in part: "He will be remembered fondly for his humanity, love for God, family and community."

The St. Phillip's African Orthodox Church in Whitney Pier, Sydney, Cape Breton was established at the initiative of Black people who had migrated to Cape Breton from Barbados and other countries to work in the industrial plants that sprang up in Cape Breton in the early 1990s. These people found some of the local churches unfriendly. At the same time, Jamaican Marcus Garvey who established the United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) and the Rev. Fr. Alexander McGuire, Chaplain General of the UNIA visited Cape Breton, inspiring Black people by their call for Africans worldwide to unite for justice and progress. In response to the request for spiritual support Alexander McGuire sent Jamaican-born Rev. William Ernst Robertson to start the church in Cape Breton. The church was started in the early 1920s and was built from a Sydney Steel Plant tool shed.

