

Cardinal \ Nilaja Stewart



The book of Matthew, Chapter 16, verse 18 reads; "upon this rock. I build my church." In this scripture Jesus was speaking of Peter, his most trusted disciple and the founder of the early Christian Church in Jerusalem. Throughout her life., Card. Nilaja Diana Stewart has been a "Rock" in every area of the Church she has served in and in every job she has held in the wider Detroit community; leading, serving, working, building, and teaching, all the while inspiring those with whom she works to do their best and become their best self.

Born to two committed and service oriented parents, our beloved, Fundi Arnina Frances Brown and the highly respected and esteemed. Dr. Noah Brown, Jr., Card. Nilaja has served the Detroit community professionally in a number of capacities. Holding such positions as Program Coordinator for the Wayne County Youth Assistance Program; Social Service Coordinator for the Senior citizens program of E.L. Doles Manor; Director of the Minority Achievers Program for the Macomb Family YMCA; and Executive Director for the Jefferson East Business Association, an organization so impressed by Nilaja's commitment that they created the "Diana Stewart Community Service Award" in her honor.

Card. Nilaja serves as the Vice President of Administration for A&H Contractors, Inc. She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration from Davenport University. And she has done extensive coursework and training, receiving certifications in Small Business Development, Educational Counseling, and Leadership Training from a number of institutions, including: LISC Midwest Executive Leadership Training Institute, the Michigan Small Business & Technology Development Center, and Wayne State University to name a few.

Card. Diana Nilaja Stewart has given many years of dedicated volunteer service to numerous Detroit based organizations, utilizing her considerable skills to write grants for community groups; manage budgets for several political campaign committees; plan and execute political rallies; coordinate programs for community outreach; develop community policing partnership programs; organize and supervise community advisory councils; coordinate and develop programs for at-risk youth; develop adult enrichment programs for senior citizens and develop fund-raising events and programs that have raised in excess of one million dollars for various groups and organizations in the City of Detroit.

She presently serves on the following boards: National Executive Board of the Shrine of the Black Madonna of the PAOCC, The Black Slate, Inc. (Secretary/Treasurer); Blanche Kelso Bruce Academy, (Secretary); Mack Alive Community Development Corp. (Treasurer); and the Detroit Development Fund Non-Profit Corporation (Secretary).

Joining the church in 1967, as a "Foundational" member of the Shrine, Card. Nilaja has truly been a "Rock" giving more than 45 years of dedicated service as a Group Leader, Group Leadership Coordinator, Office Staff Coordinator, Fund-raising coordinator and church events coordinator. Throughout her "Nation Career", Nilaja's work and organizational skills have been instrumental in the success of many of our church's endeavors, and her excellent "people" skills and leadership style have nurtured and developed leadership potential in many church members.

In 1978, Card. Nilaja was appointed National Secretary by our Founder and First Holy Patriarch, The Honorable Jaramogi Abebe Agyeman (Bishop Albert B. Cleage, Jr.), with whom she worked very closely and she continues to serve in that capacity today. In 2009, Card. Nilaja was appointed by our Holy Patriarch, Jaramogi Menelik Kimathi, as Chief Executive Officer of the Central Region in Detroit, MI. She continues to serve the church with unparalleled distinction.