

Deacon Dean Lopata, Severna Park minister, dies at 74

Deacon Dean Lopata, who served as a deacon in the Archdiocese of Baltimore for nearly 21 years, died Nov. 7 at age 74.

Deacon Dean served at St. John the Evangelist in Severna Park. Father James D. Proffitt, pastor, said he was active in evangelization, which included visiting the sick in hospitals and the children in the parish school.

He and his wife, Coco, offered sessions for couples to learn to pray together. Deacon Dean also initiated the parish's Alpha program, which is a series that allows people to explore the Catholic faith.

"In some ways ... he really wanted to be a deacon and function as a deacon more than any other role or job description that his employment would have given him," Father Proffitt said in the homily at his funeral Mass Nov. 14. "Deacon Dean, with Coco by his side, was a fixture - a face of the shepherd in this community."

A native of Minnesota, Deacon Dean was raised in St. Charles Borromeo Church in Minneapolis, where he received all of his sacraments and attended the parish school. He went on to play basketball for the University of Minnesota.

He moved to Maryland to work at the National Security Agency and in 1997 was ordained a deacon. According to an obituary on Barranco Funeral Home's website, Deacon Dean would minister to anyone, anywhere in need, for healing, depression or the Holy Spirit. He traveled to many countries praying, preaching and ministering for Jesus Christ.