

Deacon James Awalt dies

A funeral Mass for Deacon James Awalt, a member of the second ordination class of permanent deacons for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, will be held June 20 at 11 a.m. at St. Joseph, Fullerton. A Christian wake is scheduled for June 19 at 6:30 p.m. at Lassahn Funeral Home, 7401 Belair Road, with visitation from 7-9 p.m. Deacon Awalt, who was residing at Oak Crest Retirement Community in Parkville, died June 14. He was 81.

Ordained in 1972, Deacon Awalt received a papal honor in 2007 and was the first deacon appointed to the archdiocesan clergy personnel board.

"Jim was very dedicated, very passionate about the deacons, the board and the care of deacons," said Father Patrick Carrion, who is administrator for the Catholic Community of South Baltimore and director of the deacon formation program.

Deacon Awalt served at Our Lady of the Fields in Millersville before retiring, and then continued to minister at St. Joseph in his retirement.

"He was an extremely kind and compassionate man," said Monsignor James P. Farmer, pastor of St. Ursula in Parkville. "His life is characterized by service and generosity. He constantly looked for ways to help people."

Deacon John Gramling, who befriended Deacon Awalt some 35 years ago said, "I would describe him as a deacon's deacon, as a gentleman and a gentle man and as a loyal and good friend."

Deacon Gramling said Deacon Awalt was "a loyal son of the church," and was "the antithesis of a cafeteria Catholic."