

Deacon John J. Briscoe dies at 81

A funeral Mass for Deacon John J. Briscoe of Baltimore, was offered June 25 at St. Peter Claver, Baltimore. Deacon Briscoe - who had suffered from heart problems and high blood pressure - died June 17 at Levindale Geriatric Center and Hospital in Baltimore. He was 81.

Ordained a permanent deacon in 1978, he served at St. Peter Claver until his retirement in 2005.

"Deacon Briscoe was very dedicated to the parish and he helped out with the repairs of the church for many years," said Father Joseph Del Vecchio, S.S.J., pastor of the church. "He was very good with his hands, but he kept a low profile. He wasn't into being the center of attention."

However, his presence was known to the hundreds of parishioners whose babies were baptized by Deacon Briscoe, who also served in the U.S. Navy during World War II, said Father Henry R. Harper, S.S.J., associate pastor of St. Peter Claver.

"He baptized more babies than any priest at this parish," Father Harper said. "He really loved being a deacon and being here for the people of the church."

Deacon Briscoe - a retired employee of the U.S. Postal Service - is survived by a son, Milton Briscoe, and two daughters, Bertdetta Bass and Alease Cobb.