

# Fellow priests remember Monsignor Collopy for his kind, prayerful heart

**By Erik Zygmunt**

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Monsignor John C. Collopy, who served as a priest of the Archdiocese of Baltimore for nearly 59 years, was remembered for his immense personal warmth and commitment to prayer. A funeral Mass will be offered May 14 at St. John the Evangelist in Long Green Valley for Monsignor Collopy, who died May 10 at age 85.

"He loved people," remembered Father Alphonse Rose, who was ordained with Monsignor Collopy in 1956 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore. The two remained close friends through the decades.

"People were drawn to (Monsignor Collopy) because of his warmth and friendliness," Father Rose said, adding that most people knew Monsignor Collopy as "Father Jack," and that he was very prayerful.

"He brought many people to Jesus that way," Father Rose said. "It was clear to people that this man believed what he talked about."

Monsignor Collopy was born in 1929 in Chicago. According to the archdiocese, his devout Irish Catholic family moved to Philadelphia during the Great Depression. Monsignor Collopy eventually moved to Baltimore and graduated from Calvert Hall College High School in 1947.

He entered the Maryknoll Society, which he left in 1951, after discerning that his vocation would be best fulfilled as a diocesan priest, according to the archdiocese. Monsignor Collopy entered St. Mary's Seminary and University in 1952, was ordained to the diaconate in 1953, and was ordained to the priesthood in 1956 by then-Archbishop Francis P. Keough.

After his ordination, Monsignor Collopy served as assistant pastor of Ss. Philip and James Church and St. Andrew, both in Baltimore. In 1958, he became chaplain of Johns Hopkins Hospital. In 1965 he became assistant pastor of St. Clement I in Lansdowne, and in 1969 he became associate pastor of St. Joseph in Fullerton.

In 1973, Monsignor Collopy became pastor of Most Precious Blood; in 1980 he was reassigned as pastor of St. Matthew in Northwood. Monsignor Collopy then moved to St. John the Evangelist in Long Green Valley, where he served as associate pastor,

starting in 1984.

In 1994, Monsignor Collopy was assigned to direct the archdiocesan Office of Pastoral Service for Retired Priests. He became a monsignor in 1999, and in 2002 he retired.

According to the archdiocese, Monsignor Collopy was exceptionally devoted to his parents while they were alive, and was a father figure to his nieces and nephews. One nephew, Daniel Baumiller, told the archdiocese that as a child Monsignor Collopy cared greatly for his oldest sister, Marian, who would die of kidney failure when he was 13.

Baumiller told the archdiocese that as a boy Monsignor Collopy would see a movie in the theater and then run home to tell his sister all about it, so she could share in the experience.

Father Rose noted that Monsignor Collopy's health waned in the final years of his life, and "he suffered a great deal."

"But he always, always - pain or no - was smiling, present and welcoming to the people who came to him," Father Rose said.

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