

COFFEY, Rev. Msgr. Andrew V.

A long-respected and beloved priest of the Diocese of Sacramento who served as pastor of St. James Parish in Davis from 1963 to 1994, died Aug. 12, 2010 at Sutter Hospital, Sacramento, following a lengthy illness. He was 89. Msgr. Coffey was born in Dublin, Ireland, July 20, 1921, to William Coffey and Mary Flynn, both deceased. Msgr. Coffey grew up on a farm with three brothers and three sisters. His seminary studies were completed at St. Patrick's College in Maynooth, Ireland and he was ordained to the priesthood on



June 22, 1947. He served in the Diocese of Meath for six months until he was accepted for service in the Diocese of Sacramento. Msgr. Coffey was pastor emeritus of St. James Parish and since his retirement in 1994 he continued to serve and live at the parish. He also served as pastor of St. Anthony Parish in Winters from 1955 to 1963 and as associate pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish in Chico from 1948 to 1955. Msgr. Coffey was named a prelate of honor by Pope John Paul II in 1979. He served for many years as coordinator of the Catholic charismatic movement in the diocese and as dean of the Yolo Deanery from 1985 to 1991. The priest was well-known for his dedication to the pro-life movement in the diocese as well as the Sacramento Life Center, a nonprofit resource center that gives pregnant women the support and resources to care for their babies. When Msgr. Coffey was assigned to Davis in 1963, the Newman Center at Fifth and C Streets was the only Catholic Church in the city. He was instructed to build a new parish separate from the Newman Center, so he organized a parish council to help guide him. Plans moved ahead with the construction of St. James School in 1965, as well as a new rectory. Two years later, a convent was built next to the school and the church was constructed at the corner of 14th and B streets. In a reflection he wrote for The Catholic Herald on the 60th anniversary of his ordination in 2007, Msgr. Coffey thanked his family, his teachers and all those who helped on his journey, including all of the parishioners in the parishes where he was privileged to serve. "I enjoyed all my years of priesthood and I particularly appreciated the support and friendship of my brother priests," he said. "The boundaries of the diocese have changed, the presbyterate has changed, but the mission of the church remains the same." Bishop Jaime Soto will celebrate the funeral Mass for Msgr. Coffey on Friday, Aug. 20 at 11:30am in the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament at 11th and K Streets in Sacramento. Bishop Emeritus John S. Cummins of Oakland will be the homilist. A vigil service will be held on Thursday, Aug. 19 at 7:00pm at St. James Church at 1275 B St. in Davis. A potluck reception will also be held immediately following the vigil service.