

Remembering Monsignor Edward J. Thompson (Father Ed)

May 29, 1923 – February 11, 2016

Ordained into the Priesthood: May 15, 1951

The bells toll for **Monsignor Edward J. Thompson**, longtime associate of St. Mary Magdalen Catholic Church in Altamonte Springs, who passed away on February 11, 2016, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. Surely this was no coincidence for the beloved priest who dedicated his vocation to the Blessed Mother. His steady presence and un-failing faith will be missed by all.

He is preceded in death by his parents, **David and Catherine Thompson**, his sister **Elizabeth Hutton**, his twin brother **Most Reverend David Thompson**, Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Charleston, South Carolina. He is survived by his nieces and nephews **Betty Jane and William, Catherine and William, Mary Christine, John and Joan** and numerous great nephews and nieces.

Raised in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Father Ed attended St. Charles Borromeo Seminary. He was ordained at Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral on May 19, 1951, a year after his twin brother's ordination.

He served in the (Arch) Dioceses of Philadelphia and Reno-Las Vegas before retiring in 1991. In 1993, he was incardinated in the Diocese of Orlando by **Bishop Norbert Dorsey**, where he served nonstop at St. Mary Magdalen Parish.

Father Ed had a deep love for the Catholic faith and his greatest joy was to be a priest. He devoted his time to hearing confessions, leading parish retreats and prayer services, and teaching catechetical classes. He was engaged in several ministries, including Knights of Columbus, Altar Servers and Scripture Class. But the highlight of his life was saying Mass, which he once described as the 'greatest privilege' on the face of the earth.

A humble man, he readily admitted his weaknesses. He was easy to talk to. While he was empathetic, he was not sympathetic. His conviction to the Catholic faith and the Mercy of God carried him beyond his own life's challenges, and his greatest desire was for it to carry each one of us too.

In recent years, he weakened physically, but he chose to remain active in the priesthood. He'd ride a motorized wheelchair to the altar, deliver sermons leaning on a walker, and take a seat after the consecration was completed, allowing others to distribute communion. His homilies were ignited in passion, as though he knew time was running short to share the Good News.

He often quoted St. Augustine, "**God loves each one of us as if there were only one of us to love.**" Surely that is true. Just as he hoped, he passed away peacefully in the rectory, accompanied by close associates.

In tribute, we can cling to the Catechism just a little more. We can get on our knees before the Lord we serve, and listen a little more closely to the calling of our Lord.

We will, in the very core of us, know that the Eucharist is everything. We will thank God for the gift of Father Ed. We will be Catholic and be proud of it.

We will carry on what he began in us.

Rest in peace dear Father Ed.

