

SACRAMENTO DIOCESAN ARCHIVES

Vol 5

Father John E Boll

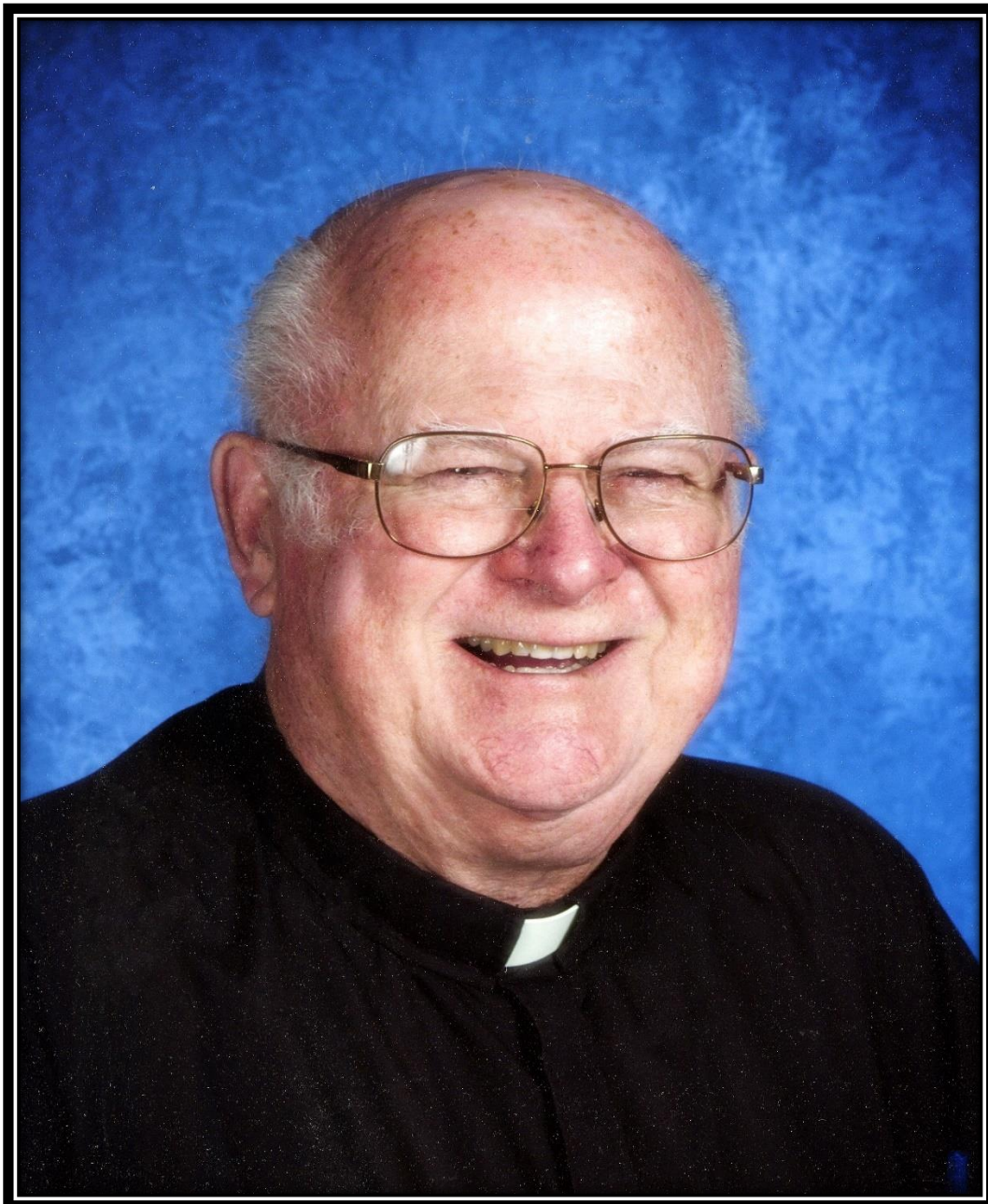
No 32

Father Edward Eugene Callanan, SJ

Native Son of Los Angeles, California

Priest of the California Province of the Society of Jesus

January 25, 1928 – June 10, 2009



EDWARD EUGENE CALLANAN was born on January 25, 1928, the fifth of seven children born to Howard Callanan and Anna C Comer. He attended Loyola High School where he was an outstanding football player. He intended to follow in his older brothers' footsteps in gridiron glory at USC, but decided after one semester to give up the starting quarterback position to join the Society of Jesus, entering the Los Gatos Jesuit Novitiate in September 1945.

BROTHER ED CONTINUES HIS FORMATION AS A JESUIT

After philosophical studies in Spokane, Brother Ed taught Latin, coached, and served as boarder prefect at Bellarmine High School in San Jose, California from 1951 to 1955. He coached football, basketball and track during the 1952-53 academic year. The following year, he coached the freshman-sophomore football, varsity track and lightweight track. It was unusual for a scholastic to coach at the varsity level but in 1954-55, Brother Ed coached the junior varsity football and varsity track teams.

BEGINS THEOLOGICAL STUDIES AT ALMA COLLEGE

After his time of teaching as a scholastic, Ed began his theological studies at Alma College, the Jesuit Theologate in the Santa Cruz Mountains. He was ordained a priest in Blessed Sacrament Church, the Jesuit parish in Hollywood, on June 18, 1958 by Cardinal James McIntyre.

TEACHING CAREER

Following graduate studies in Educational Administration at Fordham University, Father Callanan served as vice-principal, (1961-64) and principal (1964-67) of Brophy College Preparatory, Phoenix, Arizona.



Photo taken from Brophy Prep Website

Brophy College Preparatory, Phoenix, Arizona

Father Ed then began a long tenure at Jesuit High School in Sacramento as principal (1967-1974) and then as director of development (1975-1984). In 2003, he began serving as assistant to the President for Community Relations.



Photo by John E Boll

Jesuit High School Chapel, Carmichael, California

HIS PERSONALITY AND SKILLS HELPED SAVE JESUIT HIGH SCHOOL

In the 1970s, fiscal difficulties at Jesuit High School in Carmichael led Jesuit officials to consider closing the school. But Father Callanan put together his outgoing personality and flair for the stage to good use, contributing to the success of the annual auction and Spring Fling musical variety show. These fundraising actions raised thousands of dollars for the school's scholarship and operating fund and saved the high school from closure. Seeing the expansion of school facilities from income raised from the annual auction and Spring Fling brought a great sense of satisfaction, pride and joy to Father Ed.

MIKE KASSIS REMEMBERS FATHER CALLANAN

Mike Kassis, a member of the second graduating class at Jesuit High School, Carmichael in 1967, recalls a memorable incident involving Father Callanan when he was principal of Jesuit High. There was a senior class retreat that year at Christ the King Retreat Center in Citrus Heights. A group of seniors decided to bring some beer to the retreat and stashed it away. Mr Privett, a Jesuit Scholastic teaching at Jesuit High School that year, found the beer during the retreat and word got back to Father Callanan about the incident.

Father Ed decided to take action and cancelled the graduating class's Senior Ball. The parents of the seniors decided to hold the ball anyway for their sons at Arden Hills Athletic and Social Club. Everyone was surprised when Mr Privett came to the ball as a chaperone. During the ball, some

of the seniors decided to throw Mr Privett into the swimming pool. They grabbed him and heaved him into the pool, suit, tie, shoes and watch included.

The next day was graduation day and the seniors were dressed in their red graduation robes when Father Callanan walked into the gathering hall and said, "Well, men, there will be no graduation today unless you come up with the money to pay for Mr Privett's clothes that were ruined last night when you threw him into the pool." The seniors pulled up their robes, grabbed their wallets and began handing over cash to Father Callanan. He shuffled the money like a deck of cards, looked up with a smile and said, "That should cover it, men. Have a nice graduation!"

Mike says, "Father Callanan was a man of his word and a man of compassion. We learned more from him than from all the other teachers at Jesuit High School." Mike Kassis and Father Callanan became life-long friends from that day forward.

ACTIVE IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Father Ed was also active in civic affairs serving on the boards of the Cenacle Sisters Retreat House and the Sacramento County Battered Women's Home. When he left Sacramento for Phoenix in 1984, about 900 friends attended the going-away party for him. Father Ed left a memorable legacy at Jesuit High School, Carmichael and the Diocese of Sacramento.

MINISTRY IN JESUIT PARISHES

Father Ed served many years in parish work. He was associate pastor of Saint Francis Xavier Church in Phoenix from 1984-1986, associate and later pastor of Blessed Sacrament Church in Hollywood from 1986-1990, and then pastor of Saint Francis Xavier Parish from 1990-2002. While pastor in Phoenix, he involved himself with diocesan affairs, listing twelve committees on which he served.



Photo from the St Francis Xavier Parish website

Saint Francis Xavier Parish, Phoenix, Arizona

ASSISTS AT ASSUMPTION PARISH, CARMICHAEL

While Father Callanan served as assistant to the President for Community Relations at Jesuit High School, he also celebrated Mass regularly at the local diocesan parish of Our Lady of the Assumption in Carmichael. Father Brendan McKeefry who was pastor of the parish at the time described Father Callanan as “a very gentle, jovial and faithful man” who loved to celebrate Mass and then go out to breakfast with parishioners he had come to know well.

Father Michael Gilson, SJ, superior of the Jesuit community in Sacramento, remembered Father Callanan’s goodness with people and his generosity, noting that Father Callanan “loved people and loved to laugh.”



Photo from the Web

Blessed Sacrament Church, Hollywood, California

FATHER CALLANAN IS CALLED HOME TO GOD

As Father Callanan’s health began to decline, he moved to the Sacred Heart Jesuit Center in Los Gatos. Father Gilson said that the profound difference he made in so many lives was evident in the steady stream of visitors who came to visit him in his final days at Sacred Heart Center. Father Ed died of kidney failure on June 10, 2009 at the age of 81.

A Mass was celebrated for him on June 17 at Saint Ignatius Church in Sacramento and he was buried at the Jesuit cemetery near the Mission Church in Santa Clara.

IN MEMORIAM

Father Edward Callanan was an amazing man. When he responded to the Lord’s call to ministry in the Jesuit community, he was a freshman in college destined to lead his college football team to victory as the starting quarterback. But in the midst of the emotional rush of playing football, he decided to withdraw from USC and entered the Jesuit novitiate in Los Gatos. That was an amazing decision to

make for a young man with great athletic ability. But once he made that decision, he never looked back.

What I remember most about Father Ed was his warm and friendly personality. He had a great smile and a hearty laugh which was contagious. When Jesuit High School in Carmichael was struggling financially, it was Father Ed who helped organize the annual auction and Spring Fling which pulled the Sacramento community together to support Jesuit High School. Without his welcoming personality and amazing talent, Jesuit High School might not exist today.

Part of the Jesuit charism from the days of Saint Ignatius is that a member of the *Compania de Jesus* must be ready to move in twenty-four hours when the need arises. Father Ed moved many times when his unique talent was needed throughout California and the South West.

Father Callanan was well known and much loved by thousands of people because he was a man who kept his word and took action when needed. He was also gentle and loving and above all a happy priest. Jesuit High School and Sacramento was blessed to have him with us for so many years as he shared his amazing talent and joyful spirit to help build up the People of God wherever he was sent. We in Sacramento were blessed to know him and to journey with him.



Photo by John E Boll

Carmel by the Sea



*Lord,
You called Father Ed Callanan
to join you on the journey
as a Jesuit and a priest.*

*He joyfully responded
and served your people
wherever you sent him.*

*May he abide with you now
in joy and peace.*

Amen