

DIOCESE OF ORANGE



MEDIA RELATIONS
RYAN LILYENGREN
714-282-3075
RYANL@RCBO.ORG

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE DIOCESE OF ORANGE CELEBRATES PATRIARCH'S 90TH BIRTHDAY

Rev. Monsignor John F. Sammon has devoted 63 years as a Shepherd of the Faith

ORANGE, Calif., (Nov. 30, 2005) – The liturgical calendar marks December 10th as the sixth day of the second week of Advent, but locally the Diocese of Orange will also be celebrating the 90th Birthday of Rev. Monsignor John F. Sammon. Having worked in the Diocese since its founding twenty-nine years ago and with a clerical life of service that spans sixty-three years, John Sammon has established an enviable reputation as a hands-on motivator and encouraging spirit of people. Closing in on the century mark, Msgr. Sammon shows little interest in retirement.

"John Sammon has been a catalyst for growth and change here in the Diocese of Orange. He has been a tireless advocate for interreligious outreach and has earned the admiration of area police officers and fire fighters while serving as their chaplain. As a priest and pastor he brought tireless energy and good humor to a service career that is genuinely unique. He is an inspiration to us all," said the Most. Rev. Tod D. Brown, Bishop of Orange.

Born in Massachusetts, Sammon was educated at Boston College, Holly Cross College and St. Mary's Seminary before his ordination in 1942. His first assignment in California was at Our Lady of Victory in Compton. In the years preceding the establishment of the Diocese of Orange, he served as Chaplain to the Los Angeles Police and Fire departments and held the same office for the City of Santa Monica's police and fire fighters. He transferred in 1960 and served as pastor of St. Cecilia parish in Tustin until 1976, at which time the new Diocese of Orange was established. Msgr. Sammon was appointed the first Vicar for Pastoral and Community Affairs and he began service as chaplain to the area's police and fire fighters.

"Msgr. Sammon is a valued member of our department and a wise grandfather to all of us here," said Chief Chip Prather, OCFA. "He brings a much-needed sense

of humor to Mass, spiritual guidance and everyday conversation. He has become an integral part of our lives and we are blessed to have him as our chaplain."

Asked why he is reluctant to retire from daily service, Msgr. Sammon replied, "I love what I do and feel that I am needed. I plan to lend spiritual guidance and serve the faithful as long as I am able."

Msgr. John Sammon will celebrate his 90th birthday at his diocesan office located in the Marywood Center amidst the hundreds of citations and plaques earned during a lifetime of community and social service. During his tenure with the Diocese of Orange, Monsignor Sammon has witnessed the area's growth and the steady increase of the Catholic population. The Diocese of Orange is now ranked the eleventh largest in the United States, a far different reality than when Msgr. Sammon made his trip west in 1942 during the war years that brought people and prosperity to the west coast.

"We are truly blessed to have a priest of such depth, skills and conviction as Msgr. Sammon. His relationship with his parishioners and the special communities he has ministered to throughout his career make him unique and appreciated by many. His personal insight and historical perspective has been invaluable to me over the years and we congratulate him on this remarkable anniversary," Bishop Brown added.

Msgr. John F. Sammon

Born:

December 10, 1915
Pittsfield, MA

Education:

Boston College 1933 - 34
Holly Cross College 1935 – 38
St. Mary's Seminary 1938 - 1942

Pastoral:

Our Lady of Victory, Compton, CA 1942 – 44
St. Gregory, Los Angeles, CA 1944 – 1954
St. Vibiana Cathedral, Los Angeles, CA 1954 – 55
St. Monica, Santa Monica, CA 1955 – 1960
St. Cecilia, Tustin, CA 1960 – 1976
Vicar, Pastoral and Community Affairs, Diocese of Orange, 1976 - Present

#

THE MARYWOOD CENTER
2811 E. VILLA REAL DRIVE
P. O. BOX 14195
ORANGE, CALIFORNIA 92863-1595
PHONE: (714) 282-3000
FAX: (714) 282-3029