

Rev. Patrick Pearse Coyle, SS.CC.

1935 - 2022

The best tribute we pay to a loved one when he dies, is to honestly remember him for the person he was.

Fr. Patrick Pearse Coyle, SS.CC. went to his eternal reward on October 17, 2022. He died peacefully at the end of a lengthy illness. On Sunday, October 16, many of his former parishioners at the Marine Base in Twentynine Palms, California came to visit him. They prayed the Rosary and sang hymns together, which seemed to bring him much joy. Their praise for the quality of his priestly service to them was echoed by many others including Msgr. Gomulka, Capt. U.S.N., who wrote in January 2000, "I thought you would be pleased to know of the exceptional pastoral care that Fr. Pat is providing Marines, Sailors and their families. From the Commanding Officer down to the most junior Marine, everyone with whom I spoke had the highest words of praise for their "padre." His total dedication to duty and genuine pastoral concern for his troops and their families are legend. For his truly outstanding service, Fr. Pat has been nominated for the Meritorious Service Medal."

Fr. Pat O'Hagan, SS. CC., who also served as a military chaplain, frequently spoke of the high esteem in which Fr. Pat Coyle was held by his fellow military chaplains as well as by those whom he served.



We get a capsule view of what Fr. Pat's service was like by looking at a monthly report that he submitted in March, 1987, while serving onboard the U.S.S. Kitty Hawk. During that month he celebrated 40 Masses, distributed over 2100 Communion, and mentioned that he was able to go to two other ships that were

accompanying the Kitty Hawk and celebrate Masses there. He mentions that they are still in the Indian Ocean and have been at sea for 87 days and that he has begun to wonder what land is like.

He once wrote, "I never realized what a thrill it would be to simply get a letter. I'm not much for writing and yet with 5300 men around us it seems like such a specialty to hear from someone back home. There is so much to do each day that the time flies and after five days or so, I realize that I have not seen the light of day. I try to make time, even if it is only for a few moments to go "topside" and look at the sea. The Indian Ocean is very calm, some days the water is like glass, really unusual. We have a daily Mass in the chapel and two Masses on the weekend. We have two ships that accompany and I say Mass on the others when I can get over by helicopter".

Fr. Pat was born in Derry, Northern Ireland on April 18, 1935 to Patrick and Louisa Coyle (ne McDermott). He was predeceased

by his parents and by his sisters, Rita McAuley and Claire Henderson. He is survived by his sisters Veronica, Gemma, and Josephine and by his brother Leo. Fr. Pat attended CBS Derry for primary school and St. Columba's Derry for secondary school. In 1955 he entered the Novitiate of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts in Cootehill, Co. Cavan, Ireland. He attended the seminary of the Sacred Hearts in Jaffrey, New Hampshire 1956-1962 and was ordained in Cootehill on June 25, 1961.



“He said to them, go into all the world and preach the Good News to all creation.” Mk 16:15

Fr. Pat took Him very seriously.

1961 – Japan Missions

1965 – St. Joseph, Fairhaven, MA.

1968 – Chaplain Viet Nam

1974 – St. Francis, Camarillo, CA.

1981 – Holy Name of Mary, San Dimas, CA.

1984 – Camp Lejeune, N. Carolina

1986 – Philippines

1991 – San Diego, CA. (Chaplain)

1997 – Long Island, NY (Chaplain)

2001 – St. Matthew, Indianapolis, IN.

2005 – Pat had a stroke

Other Tours: Tours on USS Kitty Hawk, USS Independence, South China Sea, Indian Ocean, Red Sea, Mediterranean.

Fr. Pat's first assignment was to Japan in 1962 which was followed by parish work at St. Joseph's Fairhaven, MA in 1964 and in Welfleet, MA in 1966.

“When all is said and done, I don't believe the question will be how many people we have cured or how much a difference we have made in other people's lives, but rather, **how much of a difference God has made in ours.**” – Antonia van den Beld

And he definitely did in Pat's...

When the signs of age begin to mark my body, and still more when they touch my mind; When the illness that is to diminish me or carry me off strikes from without or is born within me; When the painful moment comes to which I suddenly awaken to the fact that I am growing ill or growing old; and above all at the last moment when I feel I am losing hold of myself and am absolutely passive within the hands of the great unknown forces that have formed me, In all these dark moments, O God, Grant that I may understand that it is you—provided only my faith is strong enough—who is painfully parting the fibers of my being in order to penetrate to the very marrow of my substance and bear me away within yourself.

Extract from “Le Milieu Divin” 1957 - Teilhard de Chardin, The Divine Milieu