

OBITUARY



# Tributes pour in for 'Mr Lourdes'

**St Andrews and Edinburgh:** Tributes have been made to a much-loved priest who played a pivotal role leading pilgrims to Lourdes.

Monsignor Tony Duffy died peacefully in the early hours of Wednesday, 12th May. He was a patient at the Western General Hospital following a period of illness and was given the rites of the Holy Church. He was 73.

Archbishop Cushley said: "Mgr Tony was a much-loved figure in the parishes he served and in Edinburgh, where he was widely known and respected. He also played a key role in pilgrimages to Lourdes. He will leave an enormous gap to fill. May he rest in peace."

Following the news of his death dozens of tributes were made on the archdiocesan Facebook page.

Peter Stott posted: 'So sorry to hear this sad news. He will be a great miss to many. A great support to many people in Lourdes and those who were involved in organising pilgrimages. Rest in Peace.'

Susie Laird said: 'I'm so incredibly sad to hear this. Msgr Tony has been my priest since I was 8 years old. He married myself and my husband and baptised my children. He was a wonderful man in many, many ways



and will be very much missed.'

Richard Steinbach, president of Society of St Vincent de Paul (SSVP) in the Archdiocese, wrote 'He will be sadly missed by the SSVP. I only spoke with him a little while ago, and he never mentioned that he was ill. Such a humble man.'

Mgr Duffy was born in Edinburgh on 27th May 1947 to Harry and Lillian Duffy and was baptised at Sacred Heart Church in Lauriston. He was an only child and grew up in the Grassmarket area. He attended St Ignatius Primary School in Tollcross and Holy Cross High School.

Upon leaving school he worked

for two years at an insurance firm in Edinburgh city centre.

He decided to test his vocation to the priesthood and quit his job in 1967 to attend the then seminary at St Andrew's College, Drygrange.

After six years of study he was ordained a priest at the Sacred Heart Church in Edinburgh in 1973.

Following his ordination, he served for a year at St Patrick's in Kilsyth, before his first stint at St Cuthbert's, Slateford (1973-1979), and then served at St Paul's Edinburgh (1979-1984) followed by a year at The Sacred Heart & St Anthony (1984) in Armadale.

In 1984 he was appointed parish priest at St Mary Magdalene's in Bingham where he ministered for five years. In 2018 he joined the parish's 50th anniversary celebrations (*see below image*).

He was latterly parish priest at both St Cuthbert's in Slateford, which he had served since 1989, and Our Lady, Mother of the Church in Currie, since 1998, but recently had to step back from the role due to illness.

Mgr Duffy was the Lourdes pilgrimage director for the archdiocese, a role he had served for a number of years, and led many successful pilgrimages to the holy site.

Pilgrim Kris Thomas said: "He was a genuinely friendly man who wanted everyone to fit in and find a place on the pilgrimage. He really took the youth under his wing.

"He had a great sense of fun and, spiritually, he knew how to hold you during his homilies – he had a brilliant way in putting things across in what was a simple yet quite intellectual way."

Fellow pilgrim Bernadette Barry, a parishioner and long time friend of Mgr Duffy, added: "He was seen as the leader of the pilgrimage and the go-to person. He was very much 'Mr Lourdes'."

Mgr Tony leading the parish's 50th anniversary celebrations

