

# Monsignor Tunner known for his humor

The Comox Valley lost one of its most venerable and beloved citizens Saturday when Rt. Rev. Monsignor John W. Tunner passed away in St. Joseph's hospital, Comox, following a short illness. Father Tunner was 87.

Ordained into the priesthood in 1922 following his graduation from St. Charles Seminary in Overbrook Pennsylvania, Father Tunner's 62 years in the priesthood remains a record of service unsurpassed in the Victoria diocese. In June of

1982 Father Tunner's 60th anniversary in the priesthood was the occasion of a special Mass and testimonials from parishioners and friends at Canadian Martyrs Church in Courtenay.

Since his retirement in 1973 he has been Pastor Emeritus of Both Canadian Martyrs Church and St. John the Evangelist parish in Cumberland. In 1977 Father Tunner was appointed

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**Monsignor Tunner: Known for humor**

## Msgr. Tunner passes away

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Domestic Prelate by Pope Paul VI.

Following the diamond jubilee of his being ordained into the priesthood, Father Tunner was acknowledged the Comox Valley Citizen of the Year by the Courtenay-Comox Chamber of Commerce.

Born in Bethlehem, Penn., in 1897, the city where he celebrated his first Mass, Father Tunner came to Canada in 1937, following assignments in Allentown, Reading, and Kutztown, Pennsylvania and five years as a U.S. Navy chaplain.

On Vancouver Island he served in the Indian communities of Kakawis and Hesquiat, and subsequently Zeballos, Port Alice, and Campbell River before moving to the Comox Valley in 1945.

A man known for his wit as well as his warmth, Father Tunner was quick to point out that he was not over-

joyed at the prospect of being assigned to the Comox Valley by his church.

When he accepted his 1982 Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year Award in early 1983, Father Tunner told his audience, "I didn't like you people at first. I wanted to go back to Campbell River. But you treated me royally and I took you to heart."

Long after his retirement Father Tunner continued to visit patients at St. Joseph's Hospital. "But I don't pray with them," he said. "I tell jokes instead. I try to cheer people up."

At the time of his death Father Tunner was Chaplain of the Knights of Columbus, Dr. Briggs Council #4597.

He is survived several nieces and one nephew.

Funeral prayers were held Tuesday, July 3 at 7:30 p.m. in Canadian Martyrs Church.

Active pallbearers were Dr. L. Carvalho, Wm. Bradshaw, A. Harvey, Cy Flynn, Bart Beks, and Paul Wilson.

Honorary pallbearers were Rod Graham, C. Slein, G. McIntyre, and Courtenay Mayor George Cochrane.

The Very Reverend Philip Handley conducted the