

Recalling 'busy priest' who founded the newspaper

BY MICHAEL C. GABRIELE
Editor

Nineteen fifty one. Harry S. Truman was president of the United States. A bitter military conflict on the Korean peninsula, in its second year, reflected the global Cold War tensions. "I Love Lucy" and "The Ernie Kovacs TV Show" debuted on CBS and NBC, respectively. Mickey Mantle and Willie Mays were beginning their major league baseball careers, while the New York Giants' Bobby Thompson hit his "Shot Heard 'Round the World." Newark's Sacred Heart Cathedral was still three years away from being completed and dedicated.

It also was the year the Archdiocese of Newark launched a new newspaper called "The Advocate," which rolled out its first edition on Dec. 30, 1951 (see pages 1, 11-18). As the newspaper celebrates its 60th anniversary, the staff of *The Catholic Advocate* honors its founding editor and publisher—Rev. Msgr. John J. Kiley, who died 26 years ago. Msgr. Kiley's legacy in the Archdiocese of Newark endures today in such diverse spheres as Mount Carmel Guild, the CYO, various advisory boards and the archdiocesan Cooperative Supply Services.

Born in Jersey City in 1912, he and his family were part of the Saint Aloysius Parish community. He entered Seton Hall College (University) in South Orange and completed his studies for the priesthood at Immaculate Conception Seminary. He was ordained June 4, 1939—three days before his 27th birthday.

His biography notes describe him as an industrious young man who was studious in school yet always found numerous part-time jobs to help support his family. He had a love of writing and journalism and during his high school years he saved up enough money to buy a typewriter and became a freelance writer for *The Jersey Journal*.



Rev. Msgr. John J. Kiley

Anne Buckley, a former editor of *Catholic New York*, who began her journalism career in the Archdiocese of Newark, wrote a page-one remembrance article on Msgr. Kiley in the Nov. 27, 1985 edition of *The Advocate*. Buckley said her mentor had "ink in his veins" as he was immersed in the full spectrum of journalism and publishing. In addition to his interest in writing, he was well versed in newspaper production and advertising, Buckley reported.

He also displayed skill in graphic arts as the designer of the original, distinctive masthead (see page 11), which appeared in the paper's first edition and was used for many years. Eventually he assumed the title of executive director of the newspaper.

Aside from his journalism work, Msgr. Kiley was active in many capacities in the Archdiocese of Newark. He was the first president of the Senate of Priests and was a member of the first executive board of the National Federation of Priests Councils. He was installed as the first chairman of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council, an advisory board of lay people, Religious, deacons and priests serving the archbishop.

Following his ordination in 1939, then-Father Kiley was assigned to Blessed Sacrament Parish, Newark. Buckley wrote that, after three years, he was tapped as director of the Essex County CYO, which developed into a full-time position by 1949. That same year he was chosen to be the director of the Mount Carmel Guild Social Service Center. Two years later he launched *The Advocate* and then in 1955 he founded Cooperative Supply Services—the archdiocesan purchasing agency.

He relinquished his role at the CYO in 1969 and stepped down from *The Advocate's* editorial board in 1977. Msgr. Kiley died at age 73 on Nov. 22, 1985 at Saint Mary's Hospital, Orange. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Nov. 26, 1985 at Saint Thomas More Parish, Fairfield. Then-Archbishop Peter L. Gerety presided at the Mass.

A four-column photo, a tribute to Msgr. Kiley and his many contributions to the archdiocese, appeared on page one of the Nov. 27, 1985 edition of *The Advocate*.

For all his accomplishments, he was affectionately lauded as "the busy priest." The memory of his service at the CYO lives on through the "Msgr. John J. Kiley Award," the highest award presented to clergy or religious by the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for exceptional service and dedication to youth and young adults. The award is presented at the Youth Recognition Mass, still celebrated each year at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark (see page 8).