



The Most Reverend Stephen E. Blaire, Bishop Emeritus

December 22, 1941 – June 18, 2019

The Most Reverend Stephen E. Blaire, the fifth bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Stockton in California died June 18, 2019 after a prolonged illness, at his retirement residence at Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Modesto. He was 77 years of age.

Bishop Blaire's life exemplified his episcopal motto, "Alive for God in Christ Jesus." As a strong and decisive leader, single minded in his vocation as both a priest and a bishop, he was tireless in his dedication to the people of the Diocese of

Stockton whom he served for nineteen years.

Bishop Stephen E. Blaire was born in Los Angeles, California to Edward and Mollie Blaire. He was the twelfth of fourteen children. He was raised in the San Fernando Valley where he attended local Catholic schools including Queen of Angels High School Seminary. He continued his education at St. John's College and Seminary in Camarillo where he earned his B.A. in Scholastic Philosophy as well as his M.A. in Secondary School Administration and Supervision. He was ordained to the priesthood for the archdiocese of Los Angeles on April 29, 1967.

Blaire's first assignment after ordination was as Associate Pastor at St. Luke's Church in Temple City. His teaching abilities were quickly recognized and in 1972, he began his fourteen years of ministry with Catholic secondary education, first as a teacher and administrator at Bishop Alemany High School in Mission Hills; then as Vice Principal at Bishop Amat High School in LaPuente. From 1977 to 1986, he returned to Bishop Alemany High School as Principal.

On February 17, 1990, Pope John Paul II named Blaire as the Titular Bishop of Lamzella and Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles. He was consecrated on May 31, 1990 by Cardinal Roger Mahoney. Bishop Blaire was appointed Vicar General for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles in 1990 and served as Regional Bishop of Our Lady of the Angels Pastoral Region from 1995 to 1999.

Pope John Paul II appointed Bishop Blaire as the Bishop of Stockton on January 19, 1999. The Most Reverend Stephen E. Blaire was installed as the fifth Bishop of Stockton on March 16, 1999 at the Cathedral of the Annunciation. He served as Bishop of the Diocese of Stockton until his retirement on January 23, 2018. In his retirement, Bishop Blaire served as Bishop Emeritus, taking great interest in, and helping with, several projects, most notably the Whole Person Care Initiative and fundraising efforts for the Retired Priest Fund.

Bishop Blaire had great zeal for helping those in need. He was passionate in promoting the dignity of human life and ensuring social justice for all. He constantly assisted the church in speaking out for the rights of immigrants, those in need of health care, inner city education and

much more. Important issues that Bishop Blaire cared about are reflected by the committees on which he served. Within the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Bishop Blaire served as the Chairman of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, the Pastoral Practices Committee and was a member of the Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs. Within the California Catholic Conference, he was the Chair of the Legislation and Public Policy Committee, Chairman for the Ad Hoc Committee on Environmental Stewardship, as well as a member of the Religious Liberty Committee. He also served on the Ad Hoc Committee on Ecumenical affairs.

Bishop Blaire will be remembered as a good human being. By the way he lived his life he taught us that good is created in our world through the grace of God, and through the faith and love of people of good will. He will be deeply missed.

Bishop Blaire is survived by his sister, Mary Anne of Port St. Lucy, FL and his brother, Nicholas of Saugus, CA.

In lieu of flowers, donations in memory of Bishop Emeritus Stephen E. Blaire can be made to the Priest Retirement Fund, c/o The Diocese of Stockton, [212 N. San Joaquin Street, Stockton, CA 95202](#). Please make checks payable to Roman Catholic Bishop of Stockton Priest Retirement Fund.

To make a memorial gift online, visit [Priest Retirement Fund](#)

Funeral services are as followed:

July 1 – Our Lady of Fatima, Modesto

- **Reception of Body 2:00 p.m.**
- **Visitation until 8:00 p.m.**

July 2 – Cathedral of the Annunciation

- **Reception of Body 2:00 p.m.**
- **Visitation until 6:30 p.m.**
- **Vigil 7:00 p.m.**

July 3 – Cathedral of the Annunciation

- **Funeral Liturgy 11:00 a.m.**
- **Interment to immediately follow at San Joaquin Cemetery**