

Monsignor Edward J. Ryle

Msgr. Ryle was ordained May 26, 1956 as a priest of the Diocese of Tucson. He worked from 1984 to 2003 as Executive Director of the Arizona Catholic Conference, the government relations office serving the Catholic bishops of Arizona. While Director of the ACC, he also served as a Faculty Fellow at Arizona State University and a Visiting Professor at the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile. His publications include articles on health, welfare, and tax policy.

Prior to returning to Arizona in 1984, he had taught at Catholic University's School of Social Service in Washington, D.C. and was also dean of Marywood University's Graduate School of Social Work in Scranton, PA. During his years in social work education he taught courses in social welfare policy, social work ethics and child welfare policy and services. He was Assistant Director of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Tucson from 1963 to 1967 and Director from 1967 to 1971.

From the mid 1970s till the mid 1980s he served as a consultant and then member of and Chairperson of Catholic Charities USA's Public Policy Committee. He was also on CCUSA first personal committee and a member of it's Board of Directors. He served on the committee that wrote the Catholic Charities Code of Ethics.

His publications for Catholic Charities include the special January/February issue of Catholic Charities *USA* in preparation for Pope John Paul II's September 13, 1987 meeting in San Antonio with Catholic Charities and the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. He also wrote the article, "Options for the Poor in Catholic charities Policy and the Social Teachings of Pope John Paul II" for the special issue of Social Thought, which was presented to the Pope during that meeting.

He also wrote the chapter on the theology of Catholic Charities for it's publication on Catholic Identity, *Who do People Say We Are?* and a number of articles for Catholic Charities USA on tax justice, Federal budgets, and changes in the "Ethical and Medical Directives for Catholic Hospitals and Health Care."

Msgr. Ryle helped prepare and present Catholic Charities testimony in Congress on welfare reform, child welfare policy and tax reform.

Monsignor's current community service includes membership on the boards of the Healthcare Institute, Catholic Social Service of Central and Northern Arizona, Labor's Community Service Agency, and the Foundation for Senior Living. He is also a member of the Bioethics Committee of St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center, the Religious Advisory Committee of the Arizona Department of Corrections and the Arizona Agricultural Employment Relations Board.

Recently his community service has been recognized by awards from The Arizona Medical Association, Arizona State University's College of Extended Education, the Coalition of Arizonans to Abolish the Death Penalty, the Arizona Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers and the Arizona Department of Economic Security. On the occasion of his retirement Governor Napolitano proclaimed January 31, 2003 Msgr. Ed Ryle day in Arizona.

When Msgr. Ryle retired from the Arizona Catholic conference, the headline in the Arizona Republic was "God's Lobbyist Retires." The press finally got it right! I have known Msgr. Ryle since 1977, he often brings to mind the image of John the Baptist – 'a voice crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the lord.' He has been a tireless advocate for the poor and oppressed among us, constantly challenging public policy leaders to be stewards of justice. He not only hears the cry of the poor; in Arizona, he has been the voice for the poor. His daily presence in the legislature has eased the plight of the immigrant, the refugee, the poor, the person with HIV, vulnerable children and families, any who find themselves on the margins of society. He has suffered the plight of many prophets, heard by many, heeded by too few. Yet he remained steadfast in bringing Catholic Social Teachings to the marketplace of ideas in the public policy arena.

Msgr. often referred to himself as a SLEAZY LOBBYIST. Over the years he has been the champion of the three martini lunch. But I did notice when the tax law was revised in the Reagan years to eliminate deduction of martini expenses, Msgr didn't stop talking about three martini lunches, he just quit having them.

Msgr. Ryle has been a friend and mentor for me over the years. When the going gets tough, his advice to me has been consistent, and would serve all of us well. His advice is simply: "pray harder."