

Biography of George Coyne S.J.

George Coyne was born in 1933, in Baltimore, Maryland, and joined the Jesuits in 1951. He obtained his B.S. in mathematics and his licentiate in philosophy at Fordham University, New York City in 1958; he earned his PhD in astronomy in 1962 from Georgetown University and completed the licentiate in sacred theology at Woodstock College, Maryland in 1965 when he was ordained a Roman Catholic priest.

Following his doctoral work he continued his astronomical research at Harvard University and at the Lunar Planetary Laboratory (LPL) of the University of Arizona (UA).

In the 1970s he served as director of the University of Arizona's Catalina Observatory, Associate Director of the Steward Observatory and the Lunar Planetary Laboratory, and as acting director of the astronomy department of University of Arizona.

Moreover, he served as director of the Vatican Observatory (1978-2006) where he founded the Vatican Observatory Summer School, and the Vatican Observatory Research Group. Currently, he is President of the Vatican Observatory Foundation.

Fr. Coyne has been awarded honorary doctorate degrees from St. Peter's College, Jersey City; Loyola University Chicago; University of Padua, Italy; Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland; Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Boston College; Le Moyne College, Syracuse, New York; the College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, Massachusetts; Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, California. Also among his honors has been the naming of asteroid 14429 Coyne after him.

Dr. Coyne's has been active in promoting the dialogue between science and religion and pioneered the series of conferences on "Scientific Perspectives on Divine Action." He has also been active in the continuing debate about the religious implications of scientific evolution.

In January 2012 Fr. Coyne left the Vatican Observatory to take up a chair at Le Moyne College, Syracuse, NY, where he is teaching astronomy and developing a lecture series regarding the science and religion dialogue.