

**July 12, 1941**

**Father John Davern**



Father Davern was born July 24, 1882, at Elton, County Limerick, Ireland. He was ordained June 14, 1908, by the Most Rev. Patrick Foley, bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, for the Wichita diocese in the college chapel at St. Patrick's College, Carlow.

He was chaplain at Mount St. Mary's Convent for a short time before he received his first pastorate. He served as pastor at St. Mary's, Chase, with the missions of Holy Trinity, Little River, and St. Joseph, McPherson (1909-1917).

Father Davern volunteered to serve as an army chaplain just before the U.S. entered World War I. On leaving Chase, he remarked: "We will be in the war before long and I want to go over there with the boys." One week after the U.S. entered the war, he sailed with his division for France.

He served in the Alsace and the Meuse-Argonne sectors and was wounded Sept. 2, 1917. After a month in the hospital he returned to the front lines.

Following the armistice, Father Davern was sent to Brest, where he buried 15 to 20 doughboys a day who died from influenza.

After being honorably discharged in 1919, he returned and served briefly as an assistant at St. Joseph, Ellinwood. He then served as pastor at St. Patrick, Walnut, (1920-28) and St. Rose of Lima, Great Bend, (1928-41). He built a school in both parishes: Walnut (1926); Great Bend (1929).

He died July 12, 1941, at the age of 59. Bishop Winkelmann celebrated his funeral at St. Rose of Lima Church. Burial was in the Great Bend Cemetery.