

**July 24, 1962**

**Father Leo Debes**



Father Debes was born Feb. 22, 1902 in Claflin. He attended Holy Family grade school in Odin. He was ordained June 11, 1927 by Bishop Schwertner at St. Mary's Cathedral with four other diocesan priests and four of the Benedictine Order. He celebrated his first solemn High Mass at Holy Family Church on June 14, 1927.

Father Debes served in the following pastorates: Sacred Heart, Cunningham, with the mission Assumption, Turon (1928-30); St. Joseph, Yates Center, with the mission Immaculate Conception, Owl Creek (1930-36); St. Peter's, Schulte, with St. John, Clonmel (1936-39); St. Mary's, Chase (1939-42); St. Anthony, Fowler, with St. John, Meade (1942-48); St. Joseph, Ost (1948-1961); and Sacred Heart, Arkansas City (1961-62).

He also served for short periods at Our Lady of Lourdes, Pittsburg; St. Michael, La Crosse; and St. Mary's, Newton.

During his pastorate at Yates Center in 1933, Father Debes provided a weekly mission to the Civil Conservation Corps at work around Lake Toronto in Woodson County. He built a new rectory at Ost in 1953.

Father Debes retired because of illness in July of 1962. He died at St. Rose Hospital in Great Bend on July 24, 1962, at the age of 60.

Bishop Carroll celebrated the Solemn Pontifical Mass of Requiem in St. Rose of Lima Church, Great Bend. Burial was in Nazareth Cemetery at Odin.

Father Debes had two siblings enter the religious life. Sister M. Pia and Sister M. Emmanuel were members of the Dominican Sisters of Great Bend.