

**May 5, 1938**

**Father Bernard Drath**



Father Drath was born April 8, 1870, at Düsseldorf, Germany. He was ordained May 27, 1899, for the Wichita diocese by Archbishop Henry Grazioli in Rome.

His first assignment was as an assistant at St. Teresa, Hutchinson where he and another assistant attended the mission stations of Holy Name, Cain City; St. Agnes, Castleton; St. Mary's, Halstead; Assumption, Nickerson; Turon and Sterling.

In 1902, he was appointed pastor at St. Mary's, McCracken with the missions stations at Nonchalanta, Bazine and Ness City. The McCracken parish had a limestone church under construction during his pastorate.

In 1903, he was appointed pastor at Holy Name, Cain City, with Immaculate Conception, Claffin, as a mission. Churches were under construction at both places. He was appointed pastor at Holy Family, Nazareth, (Odin) where he served from July 1904 to Sept. 1905. He was then re-assigned to Cain City where he served until 1910.

He served at St. Francis Xavier, Cherryvale, (1911-12), and St. Peter's, Willowdale, (1912-16), where he built a school and rectory, respectively.

His longest pastorate was at St. Bernard, Belpre, (1920-1935). There he built the church which was dedicated by Bishop Schwertner Nov. 5, 1927.

He retired from active service due to ill health in 1935 after serving in the Wichita diocese for 36 years. He returned to Düsseldorf where he died May 5, 1938, at the age of 67. The funeral was celebrated at St. Martin Church in Düsseldorf-Bilk, with burial in the Vinkenbergh (maternal) family plot *Nordfriedhof* (northern cemetery).