

January 4, 1924

Father Charles Kearful



Father Kearful was born in Cumberland, Md., in 1845. He was ordained in St. Joseph Cathedral in 1872 by the Most Rev. J.J. Hogan, first bishop of the Diocese of St. Joseph. He served in that Missouri diocese only five years before undertaking nearly 20 years of itinerant missionary work in Kansas.

His first assignment in the Diocese of Leavenworth was at St. Mary, Parson's Creek in Washington Co., with missions in neighboring counties (1878). He then served St. Joseph, Humbolt, and missions from 1878 to 1886. He was pastor at Immaculate Conception, Wellington, when the Wichita diocese was formed in 1887.

He served at Sacred Heart, Dodge City, from 1888 to 1894. His assigned missions included: St. Nicholas, Kinsley, and St. Patrick, Coolidge, and stations at Scott City, Garden City, Ulysses, and Lakin. He also administered sacraments in Meade, Jetmore, Waterford, Ingalls, Fellsburg, and St. Peter and Paul Settlement, north of Kinsley. "He was distinctly a pioneer missionary...covering a territory which is today served by 20 priests."

Father Kearful's last assignment in Kansas was at St. Teresa, Hutchinson, with Assumption, Nickerson, as a mission (1895).

He returned to the St. Joseph diocese, serving in a number of parishes from 1896 until his retirement in 1923. He died Jan. 4, 1924, at the age of 79, "following an attack of pneumonia contracted on his recent return from Kansas, where he had been assisting in the absence of a priest who was in Europe." He was buried at Mount Olivet Cemetery in St. Joseph. (St. Joseph Tribune, Jan. 14, 1924)