

January 10, 1985

Father Maurus Kennedy, OSB



Father Maurus (James Joseph) Kennedy was born July 4, 1896, in a log cabin at Partridge, Okla. His family moved from Colwich to Ransom in 1919. He graduated from St. Benedict's high school and college at Atchison, and spoke his first monastic vows at St. Benedict's Abbey July 2, 1919.

He was ordained June 6, 1925, by the Most Rev. John Ward, bishop of Leavenworth, and he celebrated his first solemn Mass at St. Aloysius Church in Ransom.

Father Maurus was an instructor of mathematics and the athletic director of Maur Hill School in Atchison (1925-1929). He was mathematics instructor at St. Benedict's College, coach of the tumbling team and the faculty representative of athletics (1929-32). At Maur Hill, he was director of chorus, orchestra, and theater.

From 1938 to 1941, he was department head for music and drama at the college. While a pastor in Kansas City, Kans., he served as president of the archdiocesan unit of the National Catholic Music Educators (1952-56).

During World War II, he served as a navy chaplain.

His pastoral assignments included: St. Benedict's, Atchison, (1933-34); St. Mary's, Purcell, (1935-38); St. Bridget's, Axtell, (1941-42); Sts. Peter and Paul, Seneca, (1942-43); St. Benedict's, Kansas City, Kans., (1946-60); and St. Peter's, Council Bluff's, Iowa, (1960-75).

Father Maurus served as chaplain at St. Francis Hospital in Topeka only a short time before a stroke ended his pastoral career (1975). He died Jan. 10, 1985, in Atchison, at the age of 88. Abbot Ralph Koehler celebrated the funeral Mass. Burial was in the abbey cemetery.