

July 29, 1970

Fr. Florence Kirchgessner, OFM Cap



Father Florence was born Joseph Leo Kirchgessner on Dec. 22, 1895, in Wheeling, W. Va. After graduation from St. Fidelis Seminary, he entered the Capuchin Order being invested on July 14, 1914. He made solemn vows four years later. He was ordained in the Cathedral at Baltimore, Md., by Auxiliary Bishop Eugene Corrigan on May 26, 1921.

He served in a variety of assignments as a teacher, pastor and as a member of the Capuchin Mission Band.

In Kansas, he taught at St. Joseph's College in Hays. He had a series of assignments from 1930 to 1934 that included pastoral assignments at St. Severin, Severin; St. John, Hyacinth; and Sacred Heart, Ness City.

After assignments in Pittsburgh, Pa.; Dover, Ohio; and Ponce, Puerto Rico, he returned to Kansas.

Father Florence was superior and pastor at Sacred Heart, Ness City (1951-53) where he built a new church. He was then chaplain at the Dominican Sisters Motherhouse in Great Bend (1953-54).

His remaining Kansas assignments were at St. Mary, Herndon; St. Joseph, Hays; and again at St. John, Hyacinth.

He also served in chaplaincies at a hospital and convent in West Virginia and Pennsylvania, respectively.

Father Florence died at San Rosario Hospital, Cambridge Springs, Pa., on July 29, 1970. He was 74. Father Thomas More Janeck, provincial, celebrated the funeral Mass at St. Augustine Church, Pittsburgh. Burial was in the Capuchin plot of St. Augustine Cemetery, Millvale, Pa.