

November 1, 1941

Father Colin Niederpruem



Father Niederpruem was born May 17, 1878, in Trier, Germany. When he was two, he moved with his family to the United States and settled in Milwaukee, Wisc. He attended Marquette University and St. Meinrad's Seminary. He was ordained June 9, 1906, by Bishop Dennis O'Donaghue of Louisville for the Diocese of Wichita.

In his first assignment, he served as an assistant to Msgr. Moses McGuire at St. Mary's, Newton (1906-10).

In 1910, Father Niederpruem was appointed to his first and only pastorate at Holy Family, Odin. There he built the rectory (1914) and the convent (1928).

Father Niederpruem was pastor at Odin for 31 years. He died of a stroke on All Saints' Day, Nov. 1, 1941. Bishop Winkelmann celebrated the funeral Mass at Holy Family Church. More than 2,000 people attended. Burial was in the parish cemetery.

"Father Niederpruem had become an institution at Odin. Physically, he was a small man; but he was a big man when it came to attending his pastoral duties..."

Shortly after his appointment during a gathering of priests, one of them said: "Father, you are too small a man for the big Odin parish." His answer was spirited and prophetic: "I may be a small man, but watch my smoke."

Odin had every conceivable church devotion. Father Niederpruem was indefatigable in the sanctuary.

Outstanding was his zealous promotion of vocations. He lived to see nine young Odin men, whom he had encouraged and instructed, ordained as priests.... The (estimated) number of Odin girls who entered the convent in Father Niederpruem's pastorate...40." (AR Nov. 7, 1941)