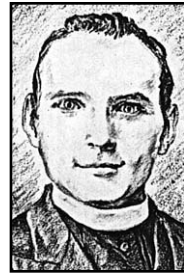


July 26, 1887

Bishop-elect James O'Reilly



Bishop-elect O'Reilly was born in 1846 in Killyfana, Redhills, County Cavan, Ireland. He was ordained Feb. 16, 1874, for the Vicariate Apostolic of Kansas by Bishop Fink at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Leavenworth.

He served as an assistant at the Cathedral from 1874 to 1878. During that time he attended the missions of Sacred Heart, Kickapoo, and St. Ignatius, Fort Leavenworth.

He also served as chaplain at St. John's Hospital, Leavenworth (1878-81), and Cathedral rector (1880-81). He was named pastor at the Church of the Assumption at Topeka in 1881.

In 1887 Bishop Fink requested the division of the Leavenworth Diocese, which at the time included the entire state of Kansas. Pope Leo XIII divided the western part of the Leavenworth diocese in two creating the Diocese of Concordia and the Diocese of Wichita.

Father O'Reilly was appointed bishop of the new Wichita diocese. He learned of his appointment, but was stricken with malarial typhoid fever on July 15. He died July 26, 1887 at the age of 41.

"About ten days ago a cablegram was received here to the effect that Rev. O'Reilly had been appointed the bishop for the Wichita Diocese. The report was confirmed, but the official papers (papal bull) have not yet arrived, although they are daily expected." (*Topeka Daily Capital*, July 27, 1887)

Father E. Dooley celebrated the funeral at the Church of the Assumption. Burial was in Mount Calvary Cemetery in Topeka.