

June 11, 1935

Father William Rice



Father Rice was born Sept. 11, 1877, in Rochester, NY. He was ordained June 14, 1902, for the Wichita diocese by Bishop Bernard McQuaid in St. Patrick Cathedral at Rochester.

After his ordination, Father Rice served as secretary to Bishop Hennessy (1902-04).

He received his first pastorate in 1904 at St. Patrick, Florence, where he also cared for the missions of Immaculate Conception, Burns, and Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Spring Branch. In 1907 two additional missions were added to this assignment: Holy Trinity at Little River in Rice County and St. Joseph at McPherson in McPherson County.

His other pastorates included: St. Patrick, Galena, with the mission of St. Joseph, Baxter Springs, and a station at Columbus (1908-13); Immaculate Conception, Claffin, (1913-1927), and Mary Queen of Angels, Fort Scott, (1927-1935).

During his pastorate at Claffin, the parish remodeled the rectory into a two-story structure, extensively redecorated the church and built a school.

He was state Knights chaplain in 1906 and 1907. He served on the diocesan school board from 1923 to 1934.

Father Rice died June 11, 1935, at Mercy Hospital in Fort Scott at the age of 58. He had been sick for several months and his death was not unexpected.

Msgr. Francis Morrell, chancellor, celebrated the funeral Mass in St. Mary's Cathedral, Wichita. Bishop Schwertner and Bishop J. Henry Tihen were in attendance. Burial was at Calvary Cemetery in Wichita.