

Dated May 24, 1959

Pastor of St. Mary's Catholic Church Dies After Lengthy Illness

The Very Rev. Msgr. Joseph J. Seimetz, pastor of St. Mary's Catholic church in Decatur for more than a quarter of a century, died at 3:45 o'clock Monday afternoon at the St. Joseph hospital in Fort Wayne.

The Monsignor had been confined to the Fort Wayne hospital since Saturday, Jan. 24, when suffered a stroke at the church rectory. His condition remained serious throughout his long hospitalization although some slight improvement had been reported at times.

However, the prelate began to weaken early Monday morning and his condition became progressively worse until death.

He was 74 years of age.

Funeral Rites Friday

He was born in Michigan City Sept. 3, 1884, a son of John and Catherine Seimetz. The pastor's only immediate survivors are two sisters, the Misses Elizabeth and Christine Seimetz, both of Michigan City.

The funeral mass will be celebrated at 11 o'clock Friday morning at the St. Mary's Catholic church, with burial in the Catholic cemetery.

Friends may call at the Gillig & Doan funeral home at 2:30 o'clock Wednesday afternoon.

The body will be removed to the church Thursday afternoon, and will lie in state from 2 p.m. Thursday until services Friday morning.

To Decatur In 1933

Msgr. Seimetz was appointed pastor of the St. Mary's church Jan. 27, 1933, by the Most Rev. John F. Noll, bishop of the Fort Wayne diocese.

He succeeded his uncle, the Rev. Julius A. Seimetz, who died Dec. 28, 1932, after serving the local parish since 1914.

The beloved pastor saw one of his fondest hopes and dreams realized in 1954, when the magnificent new church was completed and dedicated, after many years of work toward this goal.

Msgr. Seimetz, a native of Michigan City, received his education at St. Mary's high school at Michigan City, St. Joseph's College at Rensselaer, and Mt. St. Mary's Seminary at Cincinnati, O.

Ordained in 1911

He was ordained to the priesthood June 17, 1911, in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne, by the late Bishop Alerding. His first assignment was as a s assistant priest of St. Joseph's Catholic church in Logansport. In 1920, he was appointed pastor at St. Patrick's Catholic church in Chesterton, serving that parish until his appointment as Decatur pastor in 1933.

One of the highlights of the pastor's career was his investiture Sept. 20, 1945, as the Very Rev. Monsignor, the first Decatur pastor to become a monsignor. He was elevated to membership in Papal household and invested with the robes of Papal chamberlain by the late Pope Pius XII. The investiture rites were conducted by Bishop Noll in 1945.

An appropriate celebration was held here in 1936 to commemorate the pastor's 25th jubilee year in the priesthood.

Msgr. Seimetz was further humored for his loyal and devoted work to the church by being named dean of the newly-formed Huntington deanery May 1, 1957.

Keenly interested in the welfare of the children of his parishioners, his foremost thoughts were of the Catholic high school and the St. Joseph elementary school. Under his guidance, the school system gained wide renown for its educational features and has ranked well scholastically for many years.

New Church His Goal

However, the crowning touch of his long devotion to his church and his people must have come in those days in May, 1954, when he celebrated the first mass in the beautiful new church and the for (rest is missing)

Msgr. Seimetz Funeral Rites Set Friday

Funeral services for Msgr. Joseph. J. Seimetz, pastor of St. Mary's Church, Decatur, and dean of the Huntington deanery, will be conducted Friday at the Decatur church.

Msgr. Seimetz died Monday (May 25) at St. Joseph hospital, Fort Wayne, where he had been listed as critical since suffering a stroke Jan. 24.

The 74-year-old priest was first dean of the Huntington deanery, having been assigned to the post when the deanery was erected by Bishop Pursley May 1, 1957.

Transcribed by Janice Vasilovski