

Death Takes Two Priests

The Angel of Death summoned two priests of the Diocese in quick succession this week.

Rev. E. Joseph Esser, 76, pastor emeritus of St. Patrick's Church, Victor, died Monday, Oct. 8.

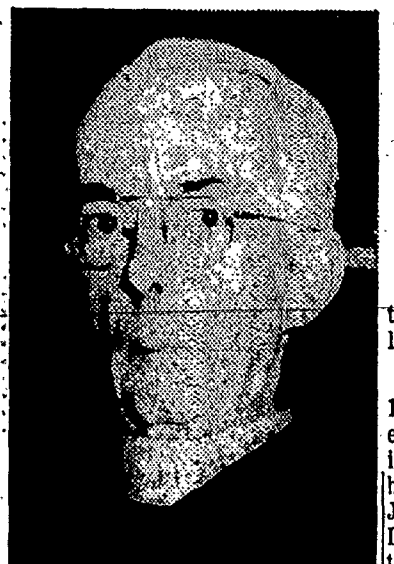
Rt. Rev. Msgr. Andrew Hallak, 74, pastor of St. Nicholas Church, Rochester, died Tuesday, Oct. 9.

Funeral Mass for Father Esser will be offered at the Victor Church this morning, Friday, at 10:30 a.m. Rt. Rev. Msgr. Charles E. Shay will be celebrant; Rev. Leonard Kelly, deacon, and Rev. Alphonsus Crimmens, subdeacon.

Solemn Liturgy (Mass) for Monsignor Hallak will be offered at St. Nicholas Church tomorrow, Saturday, at 10 a.m. Melkite rite priests attending the funeral will celebrate the Mass together. Following the Mass, the Melkite Supplication for the Dead will be chanted.

Biographical details of the two priests follow:

FATHER ESSER, a native of Rochester, was born Sept. 14, 1886, the son of Emil J. and Katharine Fitzgerald Esser. The



FATHER ESSER

Fitzgerald's were a pioneer family in the city, settling here in 1824 and were among the first members of Rochester's first parish, St. Patrick's, later to become the Cathedral.

Father Esser attended St. Bridget's school, East High School, St. Andrew's and St. Bernard's seminaries. He was ordained in old St. Patrick's Cathedral by Archbishop Thomas F. Hickey, Rochester's second bishop, June 6, 1914.

He served as an assistant pastor at St. Ann's Church, Hornell; St. Mary's Church, Bath, and St. Mary's Church, Rochester. He was then assigned to do special catechetical work at Our Lady of Sorrows Church (no longer in operation), Rochester.

He was named pastor of St. James Church, Trumansburg, in 1920, and fifteen years later was transferred to his Victor pastorate where he renovated the church, constructed a baptistry and built the recently completed catechetical center. He retired from active pastoral duties last year and was named pastor emeritus.

Priests of the Diocese chanted Vespers of the Dead for him in St. Patrick's Church last evening. Burial will be in the family plot, Holy Sepulchre Cemetery.

MONSIGNOR HALLAK died suddenly less than a month af-

ORDAINED IN 1912, he began his priestly career as secretary to Flavians Kfoury, Archbishop of Homs, Hama and Yabroud.

Two years later he was assigned to teach Arabic and French at the Oriental College of Zahle in Lebanon. During eight years as a member of the college faculty he also assisted in pastoral duties in the parishes of St. Barbara, St. Michael and the Cathedral of the Assumption in Zahle.

In 1920, Monsignor Hallak left his native Lebanon to aid souls in a land new and strange to him. His first appointment in the United States was in the Erie diocese at Dubois, Pennsylvania. After ten years of service there, he served temporarily as pastor of Holy Saviour parish, Montreal, Canada.

He returned to Dubois in 1931 and also took care of two other churches in the Pittsburgh and Altoona areas. That same year he liquidated the debt on the Dubois parish.

He cared for a parish in Toledo, Ohio, and then was named pastor of St. George's Church, Birmingham, Alabama. His pastorate here continued for fourteen years and again he liquidated the debt as in Dubois.

Monsignor Hallak was awarded the title of Archimandrite of the Melchite Rite, highest dignity for a Melchite parish priest, in 1939. The title was bestowed by Melchite Patriarch Mughabghab.

Monsignor Hallak came to his Rochester pastorate in 1945 after St. Nicholas Church had been without a pastor of its own rite since 1938 when Father Thomas Fayad died. The parish was founded in 1927 and serves about 100 families of the Melchite Rite of the Catholic Church.

The church has been repaired and redecorated under his direction and the parish cleared of indebtedness. He presided at the parish silver jubilee in 1952, the year which also marked his fortieth anniversary of ordination.

25 Years Ago

(From the files of the Catholic Courier Journal, Oct. 14, 1937)

A mammoth civic reception in New York Central Railroad Station with people of the various parishes invited was announced to greet Bishop James E. Kearney coming from Salt Lake City to be installed as Fifth Bishop of Rochester in Sacred Heart Pro-Cathedral, Nov. 11.

Bishop Walter A. Foery of Syracuse, a former parishioner, called present parishioners to renewed parish effort and zeal at Solemn Pontifical Mass he celebrated in the "new" St. Bridget's Church, Rochester transformed after the disastrous fire.

Following announcement in Detroit by the Rev. Charles E. Coughlin that he would cancel his contract for a series of National radio addresses scheduled to start Oct. 31, 1937, Archbishop Edward Mooney of Detroit in a statement said he had not been informed that the broadcasts were to be cancelled and that the action represented "an entirely independent decision" on the part of Father Coughlin.

General Eckert To Be Feted

Tribute for his eight years as Colonel of Rochester Regiment, Knights of St. John and 45 years in the order will be paid Emil G. Eckert at a testimonial dinner, Saturday, Oct. 13 at 6:30 p.m.

Dinner will be held at Knights and Ladies of St. John Club, Andrews St. of which Eckert is president.

Speakers will include Rt. Rev. Msgr. Joseph H. Gefell, regimental chaplain, Rev. Albert H. Schnacky, assistant chaplain; Rt. Rev. Msgr. George W. Eckel, Colonel John G. Bittner will voice the tribute of the Regiment of his predecessor.

Lt. Col. John S. Schneider, Mrs. Camilla Haszauer, supreme President, Ladies Auxiliary; and Mrs. Betty Webster, district president are to be guests. Eugene H. Biel, of Commandery 39 of which Eckert is a member will be toastmaster.

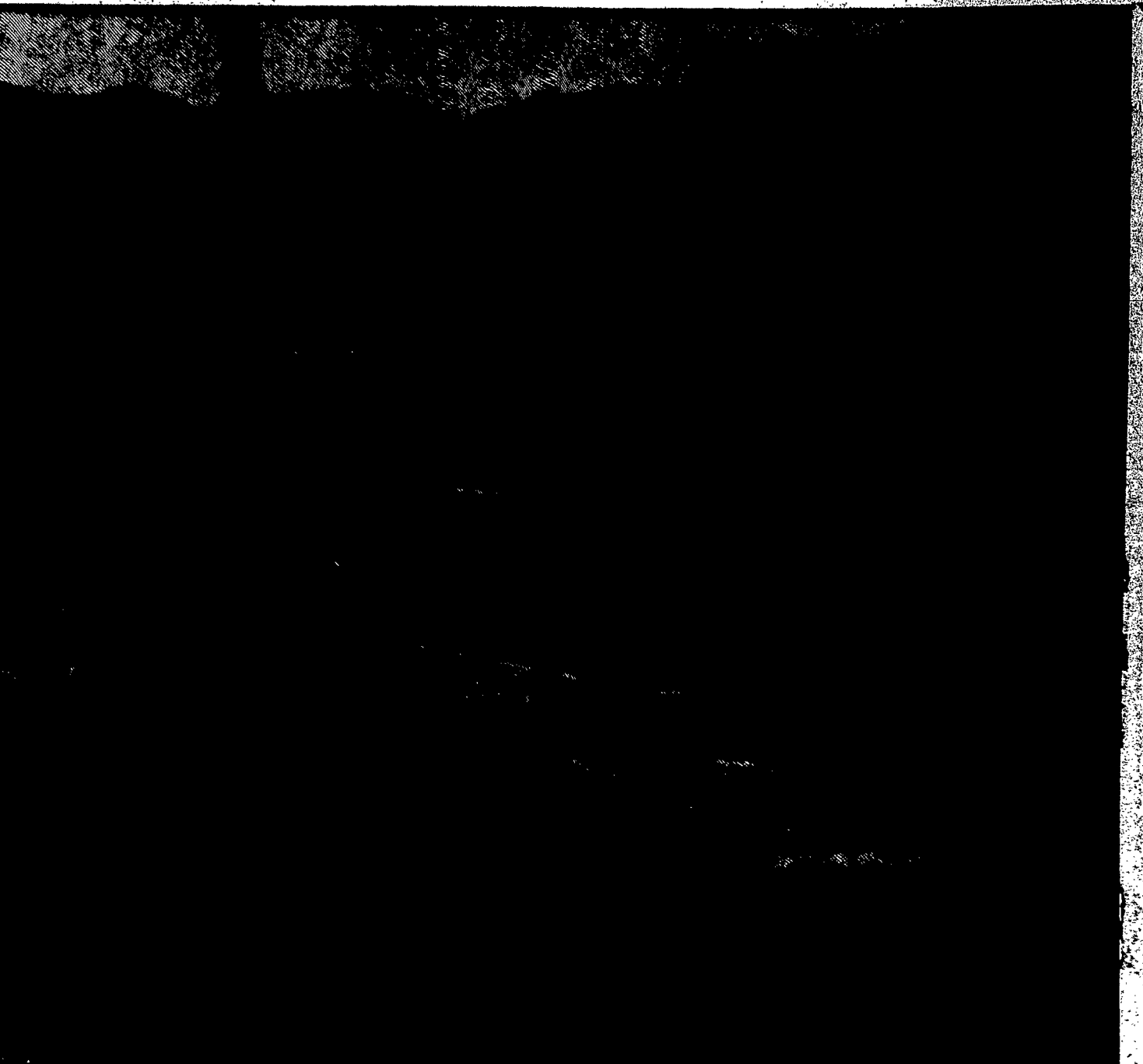
Emil Eckert joined the order June 6, 1917. He held various posts in St. Eustace Commandery and was president for 20 years. He served as first and second lieutenant and captain before being Colonel and was regimental adjutant. He is president of New York Grand Commandery.

Quartermaster R. Albert Scranton is chairman with Edward Lang, vice chairman of the dinner. Price of ticket is \$3.50.

Pope Prays For Schirra

Vatican City — (RNS)—Pope John XXIII offered prayers for the safety of Comdr. Walter M. Schirra, Jr., American astronaut who circled the globe six times, Vatican sources disclosed here.

Osservatore Romano, Vatican City newspaper, carried the story of Schirra's space flight, but without comment.



Rochester's Father Grace was aboard a naval carrier Kearsage last week when it picked up astronaut Walter Schirra.

Chaplain Sees

Schirra Flight Ship Recovery

A Rochester priest was an on-the-spot witness of astronaut Walter Schirra's return from orbit last week.

Father Patrick J. Grace, U.S. Navy chaplain, was aboard the aircraft carrier Kearsage which picked up the Sigma Seven capsule after it rounded the earth six times Wednesday, Oct. 3.

In a letter to his mother, Mrs. Bridget M. Grace, 212 Normandy Ave., Rochester, Father

Grace described his experience as "too good to be true."

He said "bright sun, blue sky, a few scattered clouds, and a sea almost like glass" created a perfect setting for the recovery operation.

Father Grace had three hours sleep and then joined crewmen in scanning the skies for Schirra.

"Reports kept us up on the flight," Father Grace said, "and he kept getting closer. All of a sudden, somebody yelled 'There he is!' — and there he was directly over the ship at about 50,000 feet. The capsule was leaving a vapor trail. At 10,000 feet the parachute opened and he floated down the rest of the way."

"We headed full speed toward him and when the capsule landed in the water, he was less than five miles directly ahead of the ship. At sea, five miles is nothing. We could see everything as if we were sitting in a grandstand."

ON THE EVE of the historic flight, Father Grace offered a prayer which was widely quoted on U.S. radio and TV reports. Schirra listened to it on a tape recording made when Father Grace said the prayer over the Kearsage's public address system.

Text of the prayer follows: O Almighty and Everlasting God, Who, by Thine infinite wisdom and limitless power, did bring into being this put and wondrous universe, we humbly ask Thy guidance and assistance in our search to fathom its deep and endless mysteries. We are rightfully proud of our efforts and accomplishments in this regard — we are equally humble in the knowledge that



FATHER GRACE

the mysteries which we probe, as well as the minds and talents with which we probe, have their source in Thee.

Several blessings we would ask of Thee this night. Bless, O God, our nation, the United States of America, that we might ever be generous in serving her as Thou hast been in blessing her. Bless this ship and all who serve in her; be with us as we seek to accomplish our assigned task; if it be Thy Will, crown our efforts with success. Above all, we pray for the safety and well-being of Thy servant, Walter Schirra, and for the success of his mission. Grant to this courageous servant of his nation the consolation of Thy presence and strength. Fill his spirit with patience, fortitude, perseverance, and an abiding trust in Thy gracious Providence. Protect him against all harm and grant him a safe return to those who await to receive and welcome him. May Thy holy angels be his constant companions throughout his flight. Amen.

Father Grace was ordained in 1940 and entered the Navy chaplains corps in 1953.

CYO Drive Nears Close

The thirty-first annual membership campaign of the CYO will close with a dinner meeting at Columbus Civic Center next Tuesday night. The two campaign chairmen — Fred L. Lindsay and John M. Donohue — are aiming at a total of 4500 members. Last year's drive brought in 4,100.

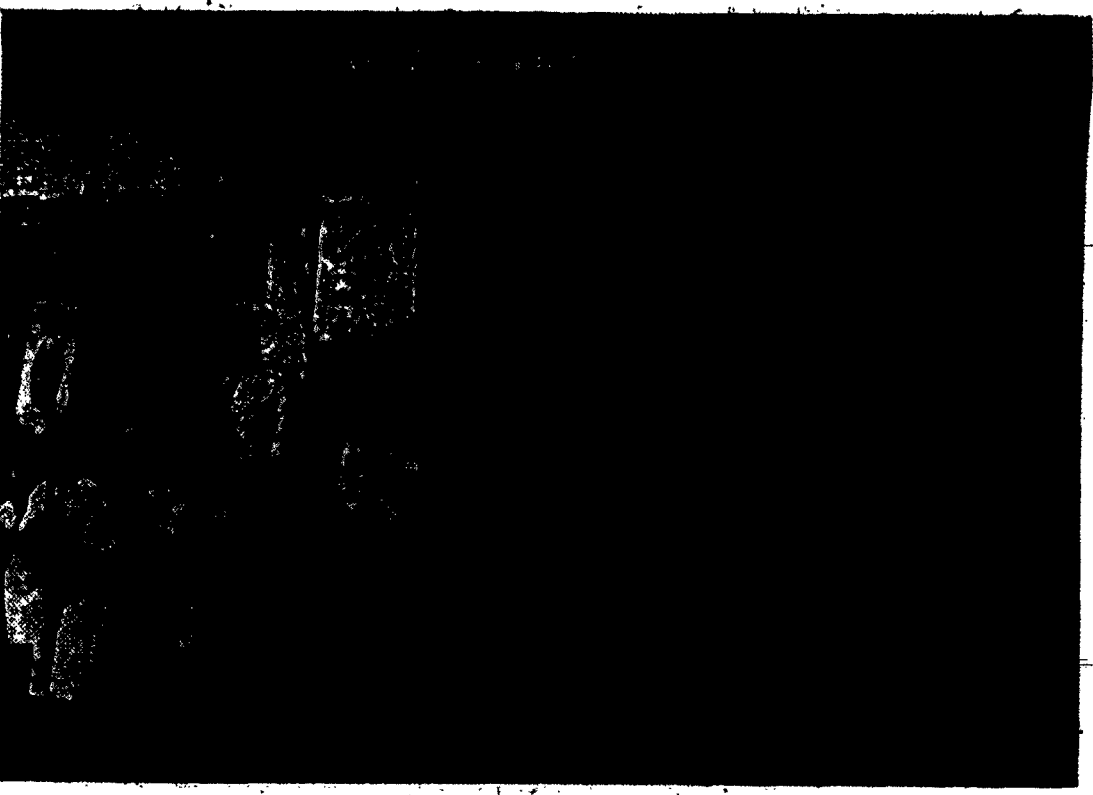
AT THE FIRST report meeting last week Mrs. Clifford Barney's division topped the nine divisions engaged in the campaign. Two of her team captains went over the 100 per cent quota mark. Mrs. Theodore G. Kosch reported 178 per cent and Mrs. John Apetz, 102 per cent. In other divisions Mrs. Walter Kelly reported 106 per cent and Mrs. Frederick D. Taddeo, 83 per cent. Mrs. Lindsay's new captain was Henry Lindsay of Fridson Company in the Industrial Division with 83 per cent, Louis Spottl with 82 per cent and Walter Samelstadt with 65 per cent.

Mrs. John J. Weidner was interviewed about the work of the CYO on Louise Wilson's WHAM program and Fred Lindsay on Eddie Meath's WHEC morning show.

Forty Hours

Devotions of the Forty Hours will be conducted in the following churches of the Diocese of Rochester:

- Sunday, Oct. 14—Holy Ghost, St. Anthony, St. Augustin, St. Margaret Mary, Rochester; St. Hyacinth, Auburn; St. John, Elmira; St. Ignace, Hornell; St. Francis, Salamanca; Interlaken; St. Rose, Lima; St. Thomas, Red Creek; St. Mary, Roskville.



Street Honors Ukraine Hero

PARISHIONERS OF SS. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church, Auburn, march in a procession, following church services Sunday, on the newly named Shevchenko Ave. The street was blessed by the Rev. Basil Ostas, pastor and the Rev. Peter Ohirko, assistant pastor. The street, a new development, was originally named Heany Ave. but was changed to Shevchenko Ave. in honor of Taras Shevchenko (1814-1861) Poet and National hero of the Ukraine.

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