

## The Diocese and the Five Giants Who Shaped It

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It was here that Father Hickey gained his deep conviction that religion is the only sure foundation of good citizenship. He realized the urgent need of instructing children in public schools in a systematic course of religion. Later as Bishop he worked with the Rochester Board of Education to establish the "released time" program which is now State law.

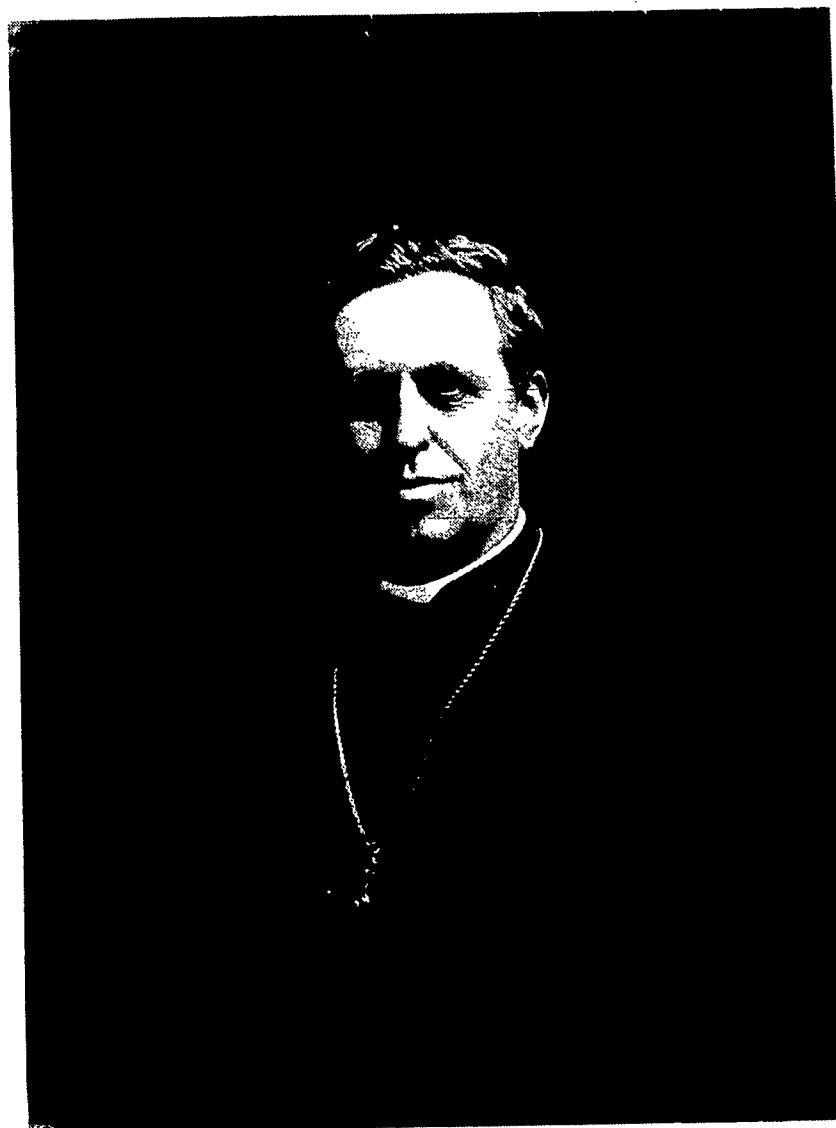
Prior to his becoming Coadjutor Bishop, Father Hickey was rector of the Cathedral and vicar general of the Diocese. He was appointed in 1905 by Pope St. Pius X to assist the aging Bishop McQuaid and was consecrated a bishop by the Apostolic Delegate, the Most Rev. Diomedo Falconio on May 24 in the Rochester Cathedral. When Bishop McQuaid died four years later, Bishop Hickey succeeded him immediately, becoming the second Bishop of Rochester.

The Diocese had been well established by Bishop McQuaid but an expanding Catholic population demanded continued new construction of churches and schools. Bishop Hickey es-

tablished sixteen Rochester city parishes and seven new parishes outside this city. He also met the needs of Italian and Polish immigrants to the Diocese by providing priests and parish churches to serve them.

To assure a deeper spiritual life for men of the Diocese, Bishop Hickey in 1915 launched the Laymen's Retreat League which today has its own Retreat House on Seneca Lake, Geneva, conducted by the Redemptorist Fathers.

Highlight of Bishop Hickey's years as head of the Rochester Diocese was his extension of the Catholic school system at the high school level. As pastor at the Cathedral he began a commercial school in 1902 for the graduates of his parish elementary school. By 1905, the same year he became a bishop, his commercial school was accredited as a high school by the New York State Board of Regents. For two decades, the old Cathedral High trained students in scholarship and faith. Graduates of the institution are found today in various ranks and positions loyal in their devotion to their alma mater. By 1924 the Cathedral High could no longer



Bishop Thomas F. Hickey, 1908 - 1928

accept the swelling tide of applicants so Bishop Hickey launched the construction program to provide a separate high school for boys, today's Aquinas Institute on Dewey Ave., Rochester.

Besides inaugurating Aquinas Institute for boys, Bishop Hickey provided for Catholic girls by establishing the present Nazareth Academy edifice on Lake Ave., Rochester.

In 1924, he asked the Sisters of St. Joseph to launch into college education and thus began the distinguished career of Nazareth College one of today's most respected Catholic colleges for women in the country.

He also inaugurated Mercy Hospital in Auburn in 1919 and was instrumental in the building of St. Joseph Hospital, Elmira. He put the diocesan Catholic Charities program on an organized basis and cleared St. Bernard's Seminary of its debt.

During Bishop Hickey's episcopate the United States was locked in the grip of World War I. Catholic men of the Diocese stood shoulder to shoulder with their fellow citizens in defending the cause of freedom. The

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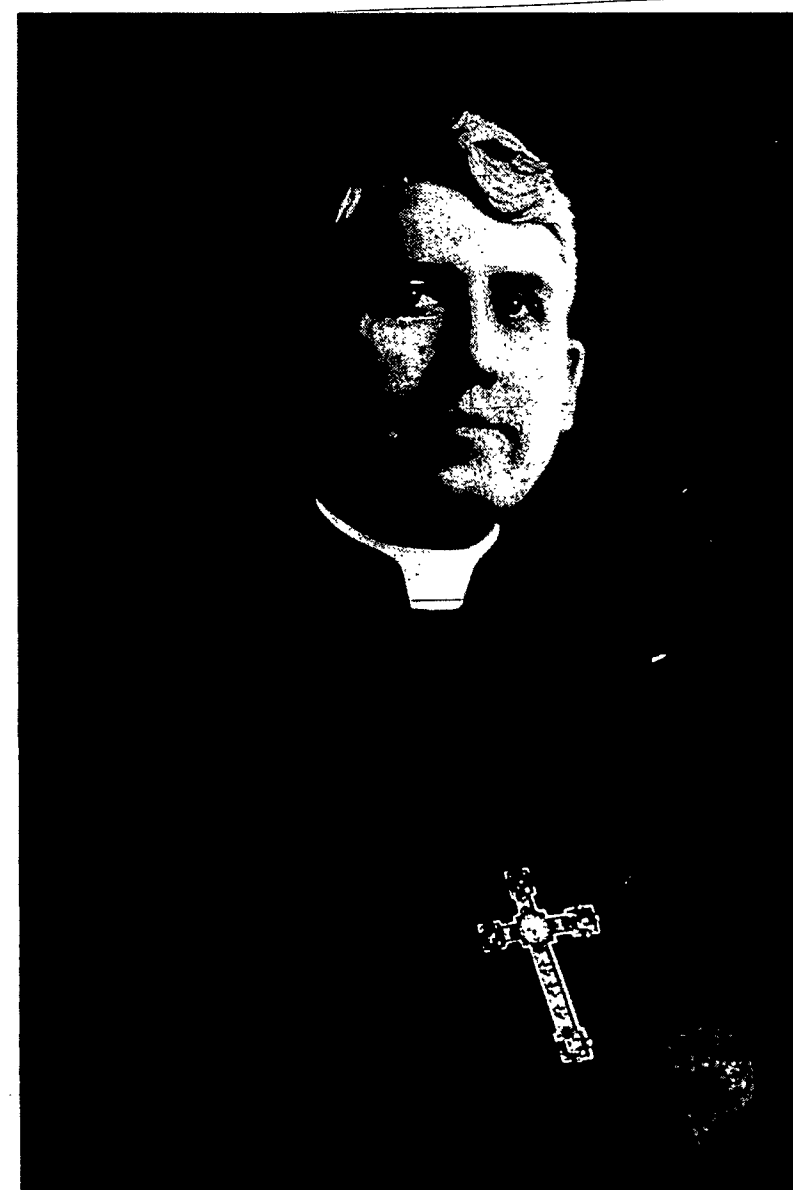
Diocese also furnished more than its quota of chaplains to the armed services. Asked for eight, the Diocese sent ten priests to accompany the doughboys overseas.

Ten years after the war's end, failing health forced Bishop Hickey to shift the burdens of his office to younger shoulders. He resigned Oct. 30, 1928 and in recognition of his accomplishments Pope Pius promoted him to be titular Archbishop of Viminacium.

Even in retirement, Archbishop Hickey continued to teach classes at Nazareth College, Mercy High and at Aquinas. He was noted for his ability as an orator and public speaker and remained in demand as guest speaker at important church ceremonies for another ten years.

Death came to the Archbishop Dec. 10, 1940 to close the career of the prelate whose educational and charitable institutions dot the Diocese as enduring monuments to his memory.

The Most Rev. John Francis O'Hern, third Bishop of the Rochester Diocese won and held



Bishop John F. O'Hern, 1929 - 1933

the title of "the beloved Bishop" throughout his brief but energetic years as head of the Rochester See. Men and women of every religious creed and every walk of life counted him as their friend.

Consecrated to the episcopate March 19, 1929, he was destined to serve in that high rank for scarcely four years.

These four years, however, were marked by an intensive activity which advanced the Catholic faith along educational lines; the establishment of new parishes; improvement of existing facilities for the sick, the aged and the orphaned; and the expansion of Catholic lay organizations.

He also provided for Catholic students in secular colleges by appointing chaplains to supervise Newman Clubs at the University of Rochester, Elmira College and Cornell University.

New religious orders were invited to the Diocese and these included the cloistered Carmelite nuns and the Sisters of the Good Shepherd who staff Holy Angels Home for girls in need of guidance.

Franciscan Sisters came to the Diocese at the invitation of Bishop O'Hern to staff St. Margaret Mary's, Our Lady of Good Counsel, St. Theresa's and St. George's schools, Rochester.

Two new high schools were also begun during Bishop O'Hern's episcopate: Elmira Catholic High in 1929 and Holy Family in Auburn in 1930.

The Fathers of the Most Precious Blood were also invited to the Diocese to serve Italian speaking Catholics in the Lexington Ave. section of Rochester.

Bishop O'Hern coordinated the charitable and educational programs of the entire Diocese by appointing a diocesan charities director and a diocesan superintendent of schools.

His own experience as a curate and as a pastor gave Bishop O'Hern a tender sympathy for those in economic distress.

When unemployment became so wide spread during 1930, Bishop O'Hern established emergency relief stations in cooperation with the Rochester Community Chest and initiated a three million dollar building

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Administrator

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To All the Members of the  
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Occasion.

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On their behalf, we congratulate the people of the Diocese of Rochester, Religious and laity, on their achievements of the past hundred years and wish them a bright future.

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