

# Parish Has Had Only Six Pastors

In its 102 years, St. Patrick's parish has had only four pastors who actually functioned for any length of time.

The first of them, Msgr. James J. Bloomer, must have established a record with his 61 years and four months in the post.

Father Patrick Hopkins, an assistant at SS. Peter and Paul, was tapped for the job of organizing St. Patrick's early in 1869. He secured land for a church on Dec. 30, and that was the last official act his health permitted. He died July 9, 1870.

Msgr. Bloomer served from July 12, 1870, until the day of

his death, Nov. 10, 1931. For the next six months, the late Father Francis E. McCrone administered parish affairs, until the appointment of Father William J. Brien, May 10, 1932. His tenure lasted until his death June 2, 1958.

Father Edward J. Waters, named pastor on June 24, died precisely two months later and the post was vacant for a few weeks.

Father John S. Hayes, now rector of Sacred Heart Cathedral, was appointed pastor of St. Patrick's on Oct. 1, 1958. On his transfer to Rochester May 24, 1966, he was succeeded by Father Joseph M. Egan, the present pastor.

# Msgr. Brien Began As Weekend Commuter

The second pastor of St. Patrick's began as a weekend commuter from Rochester.

Msgr. William J. Brien was head of the history department at Aquinas Institute when he was posted to Elmira May 10, 1932. He continued teaching until the term ended, making the 400-mile round trip every weekend.

The new pastor had been a teacher since his ordination in 1916, at Rochester Catholic High School until it closed in 1925, and then at Aquinas. He took over St. Patrick's six months after the death of Msgr. Bloomer, the parish having been meanwhile in the hands of an administrator, Father Francis E. McCrone.

Msgr. Brien served as principal of Elmira Catholic High School, which had quarters at St. Patrick's for the 23 years preceding the opening of Notre Dame High in 1955. He was a onetime vice president of Catholic Charities in the diocese and director of the Elmira Catholic Family Service. Like his predecessor at St. Patrick's, he served the bishop as dean for the area.

He gave the church a set of Westminster chimes, in memory of his parents, Joseph and Mary Gleichauf Brien. He was a Rochesterian, a graduate of Holy Redeemer School and of the diocesan seminaries, and he held B.A. and M.A. degrees.

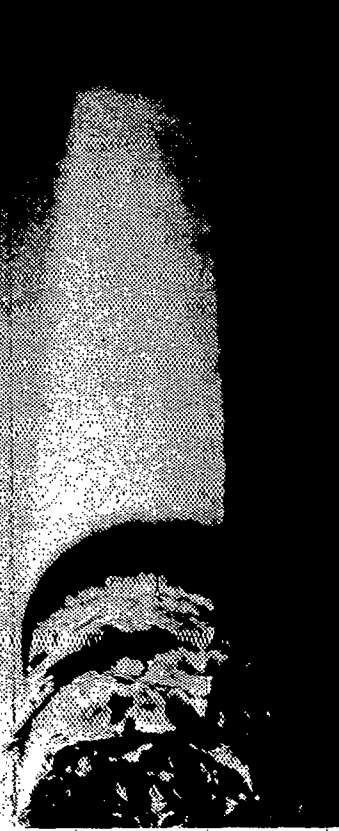
# A Diary Recalls the Past

Msgr. William J. Brien's legacy to St. Patrick's includes an item that gathers luster even as it gathers dust — a diary that tells just when everything happened.

For instance, on March 11, 1939, there was a parade in Elmira to celebrate the passing of the trolley car. Remember?

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**One cancer you can give yourself.**



On July 25, 1937, the pastor and several other priests went to Detroit by boat to attend the installation of Archbishop Mooney, and while there they heard of the appointment of Bishop Kearney to Rochester.

On Aug. 31, 1937, the pastor went to Rochester and boarded a special railroad car to go to Syracuse for the installation of Bishop Foery.

On May 26, 1946, he "prayed for crops, etc." according to his jottings, and 28 priests

came for dinner at the start of 40 hours.

Well . . .

"It rained all day Sunday and Monday and the river reached flood stage. . ."

"Conditions bad Tuesday. Water came down, Clinton St. and went through convent and school; the cellars were filled. Worst in 50 years; all bridges closed. Telephone, light and power off. Basement floors ruined and fires put out in school. Railroad traffic bad. . ."

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