Father Albert T. Daeger, O.F.M. was born on March 5, 1872, in Saint Anne's, Indiana. He entered the Franciscan Monastery and studied for the priesthood. He was ordained as a member of the Franciscan Order on July 25, 1896, by Bishop Chatard, Bishop of Indianapolis.

Father Albert was sent to Lincoln in 1897 as assistant to Father Leonard Nurre, O.F.M. at Saint Francis de Sales Church. He succeeded Father Leonard as pastor in 1900.

In 1902, Father Albert was sent to New Mexico to serve as a missionary among the Native Americans. There his apostolic zeal, his personal holiness and his dedication attracted the attention of Archbishop J. B. Pitaval. When he resigned from his archbishopric, he requested that Father Albert be appointed his successor.

It was in the Cathedral of Santa Fe on May 7, 1919, that Father Albert was ordained to the episcopal rank. On Sunday, May 11, 1919, the archbishop received the pallium.

Archbishop Daeger continued his self-sacrificing work among the poor of his archdiocese with the same zeal that characterized his missionary life as a priest.

At age 60, God called his faithful servant from this life on December 2, 1932.

"Truly there is a reward for the just; truly there is a God who is judge on earth." Ps. 58:12.
Father Bartholomew F. Besinger, C.PP.S. was born July 18, 1876 in Mishawaka, Indiana. He studied at Saint Joseph College in Collegeville, Indiana and at Saint Charles Seminary in Carthagenan, Ohio. He was ordained as a member of the Most Precious Blood Society, March 14, 1902, at Saint Charles Seminary by Bishop Henry Moeller.

In August, 1910, the Precious Blood Fathers were given charge of Saint Mary Parish in Nebraska City. Father C. Vogelmann was the first pastor sent to that parish. Father Besinger succeeded him on February 4, 1912.

During the pastorate of Father Besinger the church was completely renovated, a new heating plant was installed and all church property was restored to a good condition.

On October 30, 1940, Father Besinger was transferred to Collegeville, Indiana. He was succeeded by Father Theodore Sauer, C.PP.S.

On December 2, 1952, God called this faithful priest and religious to the reward promised to those who leave all things for the sake of the Kingdom.

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"It is in Christ and through his blood that we have
been redeemed and our sins forgiven."

Ep. 1:7
Father Thaddeus Bryl, son of Joseph and Antoinette Bryl, was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1927. He attended Notre Dame High School in Milwaukee and Marquette University in Milwaukee before beginning his seminary studies at St. Francis Seminary, Milwaukee. In 1966, Archbishop William Cousins ordained Father Bryl as a priest of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.


After forty-four years as a priest of God, the merciful Lord relieved Father Bryl of his earthly service on December 2, 2010. The funeral Mass was held at San Camillo Retirement Community in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin on December 9. Father Bryl was buried in the Southern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery, Union Grove, Wisconsin. Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz commented that, “Father Bryl was known as a kind, devoted priest who was very pro-life.”
Irvin John Weber was born on February 1, 1921, in Jesup, Iowa. He studied at Loras College, Dubuque, Iowa; Conception Seminary, Conception, Missouri; and Saint Paul Seminary, Saint Paul, Minnesota. He was ordained, June 4, 1949, in Saint Paul Cathedral by Archbishop John G. Murray for the Lincoln Diocese.

Father Weber was assistant in Falls City from 1949-1953. On May 4, 1953, he assumed his duties as chaplain in the U. S. Air Force.


In October of 1985, Father Weber was hospitalized in Kearney. At that time the doctors found cancer and told him that he had only a short time to live. Since it was his desire to spend his last days in his native State of Iowa, he went there after being dismissed from the hospital.

God called Father Weber to his heavenly home on December 4, 1985. Funeral services were held in Saint Athanasius Church, Jesup, Iowa. Bishop Glennon P. Flavin went to Minden on December 9, 1985, to celebrate a Holy Mass for Father Weber with this congregation that he had served for the preceding two years.

“He that offers praise as a sacrifice, glorifies me.” Ps. 50:23.
Norbert J. Van Greunsven was born August 13, 1922 in Tilburg, Holland. He studied at Schola Apostolica in Bergen, Liesbosch, diocese of Breda; and at St. Meinrad Seminary in St. Meinrad, Indiana. He was ordained December 8, 1947, by Bishop Louis B. Kucera for the Diocese of Lincoln.

Father Van Greunsven was assistant at Saint Mary Cathedral from 1947 to 1952. He then enrolled in the Social Work Department at The Catholic University in Washington, D.C.

On his return to Lincoln in 1956, Father Van Greunsven served at Saint Thomas Orphanage, the Catholic Social Service Bureau, the Propagation of the Faith, and Calvary Cemetery.

From 1957-1959, he was a member of the faculty of Marymount College, Arlington, Virginia. In 1959, Father Van Greunsven was appointed director of Family Life Bureau, chaplain of state penitentiary, sociology instructor at Saint Elizabeth School of Nursing and pastor of St. James Church, Cortland. From 1969 to 1972, he had a full-time teaching assignment at Creighton University in Omaha.

On December 4, 1972, Father Van Greunsven died of a heart attack. Funeral services were at Saint Mary Cathedral, Lincoln, with burial in Calvary Cemetery, Lincoln.
Anthony Turek was born May 25, 1906, in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. He studied at St. Vincent College, Latrobe, Pennsylvania and St. Francis Seminary, Loretto, Pennsylvania. After being accepted as a seminarian for the Diocese of Lincoln, he completed his preparation for the priesthood at St. Procopius Seminary, Lisle, Illinois. He was ordained December 21, 1935 at St. Elizabeth Hospital, Lincoln.

During the first year of his priesthood, Father Turek served at St. Mary's Hospital, Nebraska City; Holy Trinity, Brainard; and St. Joseph, Beatrice. On May 25, 1937, he was given charge of Curtis with the missions of Farnam and Wellfleet. During the seven years that he spent in Curtis, Father Turek shared the privations and sufferings of his parishioners. Knowing his extreme poverty, the Dominican Sisters of Saint Catharine Hospital in McCook, frequently supplied him with groceries.

Father Turek also served at Arapahoe and Oxford 1944-1949 and at Campbell 1949-1956, before beginning more than three decades of service at Alexandria and Gilead.

Since he lived alone, Father Turek frequently spent time in church where he found strength and encouragement in Christ's Eucharistic Presence. Knowing that God might call him at any time, he asked Father John Glaves to anoint him during the latter part of November. On Sunday, December 4, when the parishioners came for Holy Mass at 8:30, they found that Father Turek had made his lonely journey to eternity a few hours earlier.
James F. Gilroy was born January 17, 1876 in Ballinfull, County Sligo, Ireland. He studied at Immaculate Conception College in Sligo, Ireland, and at All Hallows College in Dublin, Ireland. He was ordained June 18, 1905, at All Hallows College by Bishop Kelly for the Diocese of Lincoln.

Father Gilroy came to Lincoln on October 14, 1905. He served as assistant at Hastings, Orleans, Beatrice, Lincoln and Wymore before being appointed pastor of Burchard in 1909. His other appointments were: Heartwell 1910-1918, Friend 1918-1928, Fairbury 1928-1936, Falls City 1936-1939 and Geneva 1939-1948.

On September 10, 1937, Father Gilroy was appointed dean of the new Falls City Deanery. He served as Diocesan Consultant under Bishop Francis J. Beckman and under Bishop Louis B. Kucera.

Sunday, December 5, 1948, Father Gilroy offered his final Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. He had just completed the first Eucharistic Sacrifice scheduled for that first Sunday in December for his parishioners at Saint Joseph’s, when God called this gentle priest to his eternal reward.

In his funeral sermon, Msgr. Thomas M. Kealy, who was baptized by Father Gilroy, directed attention to the deep faith that Father Gilroy brought from his native land. He said, “That faith taught him to have the highest regard for the authority of his ecclesiastical superiors.”
John P. Murphy was born September 3, 1905, in Chicago, Illinois. He was ordained May 28, 1933, in Quigley Seminary Chapel by Bishop Bernard J. Shiel for the Diocese of Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Father Murphy was given a one-year leave of absence from that diocese in order to serve in Lincoln.

Father Murphy came to Lincoln June 17, 1933. His temporary stay was extended and on February 6, 1936, he was incardinated into this jurisdiction by Bishop Kucera. He served as assistant pastor in York and Falls City. He was pastor of Harvard and Giltner from 1936 to 1939.

On September 1, 1939, Father Murphy reported for duty as a lieutenant in the chaplains' corps of the United States Navy. In 1943, Bishop John O'Hara, Military Delegate, reported to Bishop Kucera that Father Murphy had been killed in action. A few weeks later, the good news came from Bishop O'Hara that the report concerning the death of Chaplain Murphy was false.

In 1956, while still in the United States Navy, Father Murphy was honored with the rank of Domestic Prelate. He was invested in his native City of Chicago.

After serving as a chaplain for more than two decades, Monsignor Murphy retired from the Navy on June 30, 1961. After experiencing the horrors of war for so many years, Monsignor Murphy was called to the land of eternal peace December 5, 1981.
Father Buckley was one of the many dedicated, but little-known, priests who served the pioneers in Nebraska. His name is listed for the first time in the Catholic Directory of 1870, as an assistant at St. Vincent de Paul Church, Logansport, Indiana. Two years later he was reported ill in Fort Wayne, Indiana. A record of his apostolate in Indiana has been lost.

One of the techniques used to attract settlers to Nebraska was advertising its climate as one conducive to good health and capable of curing illnesses. Influenced by these advertisements, Father Buckley went to Falls City in 1873. He resided with his cousin, Father John A. Hayes, pastor of Saint Francis Parish. He recorded his first Baptism in Falls City on September 16, 1873.

The parish was facing many difficulties. Both banks had failed because of the nationwide financial crisis. In addition, the grasshoppers had destroyed all the crops. In an attempt to help the impoverished people, the parishioners asked that Father Hayes go East to collect funds. He had been pastor of the Church of St. Gabriel in New York City and still had many friends in that area.

While Father Hayes was on his begging tour during the months of February, March and April of 1874, Father Buckley cared for the spiritual needs of the parish. Father Hayes returned with sufficient funds to buy food for the people and seed for their spring plantings.

Instead of the expected cure, Father Buckley gradually grew weaker until he completed his pilgrimage of faith on December 5, 1875. He was buried under St. Francis Xavier Church at 12th and Harlan Streets. When the new church was built on Fulton Street, his remains were transferred to the parish cemetery.
Mark Horacek was born September 11, 1914 in Yankton, South Dakota to Vaclav and Anastasia (Hejl) Horacek. He had four brothers and two sisters. He attended Tabor High School in Tabor, South Dakota, and his family belonged to Saint Wenceslaus Parish. He later studied at Saint Procopius Academy and College in Lisle, Illinois, and the University of Illinois. He was ordained as a Benedictine priest of the Abbey of St. Procopius on May 16, 1943 by Bishop Bernard Sheil. From 1943 to 1945, he taught at Assumption High School in Dwight, Nebraska.

Some of Father Horacek’s other assignments included Saint Joseph Church, Rockdale, Illinois, and Saint John Church in Deville, Louisiana in the 1950’s and 1960’s during which time he became a priest of the Diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana. After Father Horacek retired from active ministry, he served at Notre Dame Catholic Church in Houston, Texas.

Father Horacek passed into eternal life on December 6, 2001. His funeral was held at Notre Dame Church in Houston, Texas on December 13, 2001. Father Thomas Kulleck, Father Horacek’s nephew, celebrated the funeral Mass and Father Hubert Kealy, a former pastor of Notre Dame Parish, Houston, was the homilist. Father Kealy commented that “Father Horacek had a deep faith and a good heart.”

“He must increase but I must decrease.”

John 3:30
Father Benedict Bauer, O.S.B. was born March 5, 1891 in Saint Louis, Missouri. He joined the Benedictine Order and studied for the priesthood at Saint Procopius Seminary, Lisle, Illinois. He was ordained on May 29, 1920, by Cardinal Mundelein as a priest of the Benedictine Order.

In the fall of 1931, Father Benedict Bauer was sent to Assumption Parish, Dwight, to give a mission. The renewal in the parish was evident when 225 parishioners received the Eucharist every day. This was in an era when daily Holy Communion was uncommon. Father Benedict also organized two sodalities — one with 66 young women and the other with 72 young men.

A few weeks later, December 16, 1931, Father Benedict returned to Dwight as pastor. His top priority was preparing the school for accreditation. Accordingly, he had the library enlarged and a laboratory installed.

His next project was to help reduce the debt by a reorganization of the parish finances. Father Benedict then turned his attention to fulfilling a promise to Our Lady to erect a chapel in her honor if she would aid him in his preparation for the priesthood. With the help of the parishioners, the tiny chapel honoring the Mother of Perpetual Help was built.

On January 1, 1943, Father Benedict was transferred to Wisconsin. He died on December 6, 1974 at St. Procopius Abbey, Lisle, Illinois.
David J. Cronin was born February 15, 1878 in County Limerick, Ireland. He studied at All Hallows College in Dublin, Ireland, and was ordained June 24, 1902 by Bishop Donely for the Diocese of Lincoln.

Father Cronin’s appointments were: St. Theresa Pro-Cathedral 1902-1903, Colon 1903-1905, Harvard 1905-1916, Wymore and Barneston 1916-1923, and Blessed Sacrament, Lincoln 1923-1929.

On July 25, 1929, Father Cronin had a severe heart attack. His brother, Rev. Patrick Cronin, S.J., from Augusta, Georgia, remained with him for some time. On December 13, 1929, God called Father Cronin to his eternal home.

Father Stephen M. Wloszczynski was born December 26, 1897, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He was ordained April 1, 1922 in Assisi, Italy by Bishop Luddi, O.P., for the Order of Minor Conventuals.

After five years he requested and was granted exclaustration. He ministered to the people of the Dioceses of Altoona and Milwaukee before coming to Lincoln in 1932. He was assigned to the Polish parish of Saint Mary’s in Pilzno. He served there until February 1, 1935, when he transferred to Michigan.

After serving as pastor of Assumption Church in Iron River, Michigan, Father Wloszczynski died on December 13, 1963.

“Under God we shall do valiantly; it is he who will tread down our foes.” Ps. 60:14.
Conrad J. Marrama was born November 14, 1913 in Monogah, West Virginia. He studied at St. Charles College, Catonsville, Maryland and St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, Maryland. He was ordained May 18, 1940, in Wheeling, West Virginia by Bishop John J. Swint, for the Diocese of Wheeling in West Virginia.

Father Marrama came to Lincoln on March 30, 1949 and served at Saint Mary Cathedral until 1956, when he was transferred to St. Francis Parish in Center. There in addition to caring for the spiritual needs of the parishioners, he also became very active in raising funds for the needs of the parish. Using the secret recipe of his Italian mother, he became an expert at preparing spaghetti and meatballs for parish dinners.

Other places where Father Marrama served included Manley, Elmwood, Benkelman, Stratton and Red Cloud. He retired on February 10, 1983. In his retirement, Father Marrama continued with his hobby of preparing spaghetti dinners. In 1989 he helped raise funds for the volunteer fire department in Goehner, Nebraska, by preparing his Italian specialty. Father also excelled in woodworking. One of his masterpieces is the clock in the library of the chancery.

Three weeks after celebrating his 80th birthday, God summoned Father Marrama from this life on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. The Mass of Christian Burial was offered in Stratton and interment was in Benkelman.
Patrick F. McCarthy was born February 22, 1852, in Newark, New Jersey. He studied at St. Charles Seminary, Ellicott City, Maryland; Mt. St. Mary’s Seminary, Emmitsburg, Maryland and St. Vincent Seminary, Latrobe, Pennsylvania. He was ordained August 16, 1877, in Pittsburgh by Bishop John Twigg for the Vicariate of Nebraska.

From September 16, 1877 to May 23, 1879, Father McCarthy was pastor of Tecumseh with Johnson County as his parish. From 1879 to 1884, he served in Omaha.

In 1884, Father McCarthy returned to Southern Nebraska to care for the Catholics living in the vicinity of Exeter. Later that year, he returned to Omaha and served there for the remainder of his priestly life.

After an illness of two years with Bright’s disease, Father McCarthy died on December 14, 1910. Although Father McCarthy was accustomed to life in the city, his unfailing sense of humor and optimistic viewpoint, helped him to endure the hardships and poverty that he found in Nebraska. Father McCarthy recalled that one of his farmer friends drove to Rulo with a load of corn during the Holiday Season of 1878, and sold it for just enough to buy a pair of boots for his son.
Aloysius R. Schmitz was born on January 25, 1897, in Florissant, Missouri. He studied at Creighton University, Omaha, Nebraska; St. Thomas Seminary, Denver, Colorado; and St. Benedict Seminary, Atchison, Kansas. He was ordained on May 25, 1933, in St. Mary Cathedral, Lincoln, by Bishop Louis B. Kucera.


During his retirement years, Father Schmitz substituted in various parishes not only in the City of Lincoln, but also in other parts of the diocese. Since he resided near Saint Mary Church, he could be seen there participating devoutly during the Holy Masses on Sunday and on weekdays. At age 90, God called him to his eternal home on December 14, 1987.

Daniel A. Barry was born on September 3, 1871 in County Clare Ireland. He joined the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and was ordained on June 9, 1911, in Boston, Massachusetts by Bishop Joseph G. Anderson.

Father Barry served in McCook from October 18, 1912 to February 19, 1914, when he was transferred to Colorado. He died at Colorado Springs.
Ivan Francis Vap was born on June 25, 1928 in Hastings, NE. He attended St. Louis Preparatory Seminary in St. Louis, MO and St. Paul Seminary in St. Paul, MN. Upon completion of his studies, he was ordained to the priesthood on May 27, 1954 at St. Cecilia Church in Hastings by Bishop Louis B. Kucera.

Father Vap began his priestly ministry as assistant pastor at St. Michael Church in Fairbury (1954-1956). This was followed by the appointment as administrator at St. Mary Church in Aurora (March-October, 1956). He was then made Chaplain of the State Penitentiary (1959 for one year) while also serving as Instructor at Pius X High School in Lincoln, with residence at St. Clara Home (1956-1959). It was during this time that he was a temporary assistant at Holy Family Church in Lincoln (1958-1959). In 1960, being relieved as State Penitentiary Chaplain, Father Vap became Chaplain at the Lincoln State Hospital for one year. After this chaplaincy ended, he was appointed Chaplain at the Veterans’ Hospital for one year. Following these years as a Chaplain, he became pastor at St. Mary Church in Davey, while pursuing graduate studies at the University of NE in Lincoln (1962). Father Vap’s next assignment was as Superintendent of Bishop Neumann High School in Wahoo, in addition to the Davey parish (1963).

In 1964 he took over as Superintendent of Pius X High School, and retained this position until 1981. During this time he was also in charge of Holy Trinity Church in Avoca for one year (1964), along with acting as Director of St. Clara Home (1966), and pastor of St. Patrick Church in Lincoln (1972-1981). In the latter part of his ministry Father Vap served as pastor at Sacred Heart, Shelby (1981-1982); St. Cecilia Church in Hastings and Dean of Hastings Deanery (1982-1986); Rector of the Cathedral of the Risen Christ in Lincoln (1986-1996). It was during this time that he was invested as Honorary Prelate of His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, receiving the title of Monsignor in 1991. In 1995 he was appointed to the Diocesan Building Commission until 2004. Next, Monsignor Vap became pastor of St. Joseph Church in Geneva and St. Mary Church in Shickley, as well as Dean of York Deanery (1996-2004). While serving in Geneva and Shickley, he was temporary administrator of St. Mary Church in Aurora and St. Joseph Church in Giltner until the pastor returned from Rome, Italy.

In 2004, he retired in his private home, but was called back as temporary administrator of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in North Plate (June-August, 2006). In 2014, Monsignor Vap took up residence at Bonacum House in Lincoln. On December 14, 2022, he died at Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital in Lincoln.

The Rosary was prayed for Monsignor Vap on December 18, 2022 at Butherus, Maser, and Love Funeral Home in Lincoln. The Mass of Christian Burial was December 19, 2022 at the Cathedral of the Risen Christ, followed by the burial in Calvary Cemetery in Lincoln.
Jeremiah Cronin was born December 13, 1865 in County Limerick, Ireland. He studied at Mungret College in Limerick, Ireland, and at Woodstock College in Maryland. He was ordained June 28, 1900, at Woodstock by Cardinal Gibbons for the Society of Jesus. After four years as a Jesuit, he requested exclaustration.

Four sons of the Cronin family became priests. Father Patrick Cronin, S.J. was a distinguished Jesuit in the New Orleans Province. John finished his scholasticate for the Jesuit Order, but a short time before ordination, God called him from this life. Father David Cronin served in Nebraska from 1902 to 1929. Father Jeremiah Cronin came to Lincoln on June 20, 1904.

Father Cronin came to Lincoln in answer to the invitation of Bishop Bonacum. He served in Minden with missions at Holdrege, Axtell, Arapahoe and the High Line from 1904 to 1910. He was stationed in Burchard during 1910, at St. Francis in Center from 1914 to 1915, and at Harvard from 1915 to the time of his death on December 15, 1917. He died after surgery at Saint Catherine Hospital.

At the time of his death, Father Cronin was described as “a man of retiring disposition. Those who were acquainted with him learned to respect and love him for his generous good nature. He was a priest who was deeply read in sacred and profane literature. His sermons were classic and full of deep religious thought.”
Paul Donovan was born on February 2, 1873, in New Bedford, Massachusetts. He studied at St. Charles College, Elicott City, Maryland; St. Benedict's College, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and the Grand Seminary, Montreal, Canada. He was ordained in 1907 or 1908 in Montreal by Archbishop Bruchesi for the Diocese of Salt Lake.

About six years after his ordination, Father Donovan came to the Diocese of Lincoln. His appointments were: Hastings 1914-1916, Beaver Crossing 1916-1919, Aurora 1919-1924, Elmwood 1924-1927, leave of absence 1927-1930, Auburn 1930, Touhy 1930-1931, Burchard 1931 and on September 14, 1931 he was given a sick leave.

On July 11, 1952, a short article was published in the Southern Nebraska Register stating that Father Paul Donovan was retired and was living in a rest home in New York City. Although his health was reasonably good, he could not engage in active duty because he was losing his vision.

This article brought many requests for his address from his former parishioners. They wished to write to Father Donovan to thank him for all his kindness to them when he was their pastor. They were particularly grateful for his special concern for all who were ill and those who were suffering from reverses or any difficulty.

This kind priest was called to the reward promised to those who practice the corporal and spiritual works of mercy on December 17, 1956, at Leo House in New York City.

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"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish." Jn. 10:28.
December 20, 1901  Prior Augustine Wirth, O.S.B.

Father Augustine Wirth was born, March 17, 1828, in Lohr, Bavaria. He was ordained, December 8, 1852, by Bishop Michael O’Connor in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, as a member of the Benedictine Order. Father Augustine and a seminarian ready for ordination, Casimir Scitz, were sent to Doniphan, Kansas, in 1857.

During the month of July, 1857, Father Augustine made an extensive missionary journey which included Sand’s Settlement near Nebraska City. The following year Father Augustine was named the first prior of the Kansas foundation. Under his leadership, the mission of Nebraska City was established. It was the first mission that the Benedictines founded outside the Kansas Territory.

In 1858, Father Augustine made another trip to Southeast Nebraska. There he found a backlog of many people who were awaiting the arrival of a priest to administer the Sacraments. Prior Augustine continued to send missionaries to Nebraska City until 1861, when Father Emmanuel Hartig, O.S.B. was appointed the first resident pastor.

After 49 years in the priesthood, God called this generous missionary to his eternal home, December 20, 1901.

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"Every priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices."

Heb. 8:3.
December 20, 1971  Rev. John F. Martin, C.PP.S.

John F. Martin was born March 11, 1890, in Canton, Ohio. He joined the novitiate of the Precious Blood Fathers and was ordained as one of their members on May 25, 1922.

Father Martin came to the Diocese of Lincoln for the first time in 1928. He was appointed to serve as pastor of Dunbar and Avoca from 1928-1931.

Forty years later, Father Martin was again sent by his Provincial to Southern Nebraska. He was pastor of Saint Benedict Church, Nebraska City from 1961-1966.

After devoting 49 years of his life to priestly ministrations, Father Martin was called to his heavenly home on December 20, 1971.

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"Yes, from this day forward all generations will call me blessed;
for the Almighty has done great things for me." Lk. 1:48.

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Francis Bobal was born on September 16, 1845, in Luzkovics, Moravia. He was ordained in Louvain, Belgium, about 1870. Father Bobal came to the Vicariate of Nebraska in 1871. He was the first priest with a Czech background to serve with some permanence in the Vicariate of Nebraska.

In 1872, Father Bobal was appointed pastor of St. John the Baptist Parish, Plattsmouth. In 1875, John Fitzgerald acquired lot ten in block twelve that was adjacent to the two lots the parish owned. Under the direction of Father Bobal, a new brick church was constructed on this site. Father William Byrne blessed the cornerstone on September 3, 1875.

From Plattsmouth, Father Bobal cared for the Catholics in Louisville, Greenwood, and Crete. In addition, he visited the growing number of Bohemian settlements on the fourth and fifth Sundays of the month.

Father Bobal's other assignments were: Cathedral in Omaha 1876-1877, Falls City 1876-1877. In October of 1877, acting on the advice of his physician, Father Bobal left for Chicago. He was pastor of St. John Nepomuc Church until 1908, of St. Ludmilla Parish from 1908 to his death on December 21, 1927. In 1917, while he was pastor of Saint Ludmilla's he was invested as a Domestic Prelate.
John M. O'Sullivan was born on March 25, 1878 in Listowel, County Kerry, Ireland. He was educated at All Hallows College in Dublin, Ireland. On June 24, 1902, he was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Donnelly for the Diocese of Kansas City, Missouri.

Father O'Sullivan came to the Diocese of Lincoln in 1917. His appointments were: Fairfield 1917-1918, Colon 1918-1921, Center 1921-1928, Denton 1928-1932, Beaver Crossing 1932-1939 and Alexandria with Gilead 1939-1941.

While Father O'Sullivan was in Colon, he directed the completion of the new church building that had been started before the death of Father Joseph Stockinger. It was a difficult task. There were two cultures involved in this project — Irish and Czech. Each group feared that its customs, traditions, and language were being threatened by building the church in Colon. It was difficult for them to understand that it was the logical location since there had been a gradual shift in population. The tension between the two groups made Father O'Sullivan's task an unpleasant one.

A heart attack claimed Father O'Sullivan's life on December 21, 1941. Funeral services were in Alexandria and burial in Mt. Carmel Cemetery, East St. Louis, Illinois.
December 21, 1977  Rev. Lawrence H. Kalin

Lawrence H. Kalin was born on September 16, 1900, in Steinauer, Nebraska. He studied at St. Benedict College, Atchison, Kansas, and at St. Paul Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota. He was ordained on January 25, 1936, in St. Anthony Church, Steinauer, by Bishop Louis B. Kucera.


Because of illness, Father Kalin retired on April 19, 1971, and resided in the rectory at Shickley. Later he moved to a residence in Friend. In 1977, Father Kalin moved to Madonna Home, where he remained until his death on December 21, 1977.

At the time of his death, Father Tuchek said that God had liberated Father Kalin from a life of suffering. "Father Lawrence Kalin, once very energetic, affable, with a great sense of humor, a contagious laugh and a wicked arm on the handball court, was resigned to serving God in confinement during the last years of his life. Only God knows what favors came to us through his suffering and prayer."

Funeral services were held in the Cathedral of the Risen Christ and burial was in Calvary Cemetery, Lincoln.
Father Bartholomew Kvitek, O.S.B. was born on August 18, 1872 in Mrakov, Bohemia. He joined the Benedictine Order and was ordained on November 13, 1897, by Archbishop Patrick A. Feehan in Chicago, Illinois.

Father Bartholomew was the older brother of Father Damian Kvitek, O.S.B., who served as pastor of Saint Anthony Parish, Bruno, Nebraska, from 1931-1933.

On September 13, 1933, Father Bartholomew was appointed to succeed Father Damian as pastor in Bruno. He served there until 1935.

At age 77, God called his faithful servant to his eternal home on December 23, 1949, while he was residing at Saint Procopius Seminary in Lisle, Illinois.

"Like the deer that yearns for running streams, so my soul is yearning for you, my God."
Ps. 42:2.
Victor Andrew Stachowiak was born on March 21, 1931, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He attended Saint Vincent's College and Seminary in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, and completed his preparation for the priesthood at Saints Cyril and Methodius Seminary, Orchard Lake, Michigan. On May 25, 1957, he was ordained in the Cathedral of Saint Paul in Pittsburgh by Bishop John F. Dearden for the Diocese of Lincoln.

As a server boy for the funeral of a young steelworker killed in an accident at the mill, Vic then age 10, suddenly realized the frailty of life and made his unwavering decision to be a priest.

Father Stachowiak served as an assistant at St. John's in Plattsmouth, St. Mary's in Lincoln and St. Michael's in Hastings. For 18 years, he taught at Pius X High School in Lincoln. His pastorates were at Cortland 1968-1979, Wilber and Tobias 1979-1983 and Crete 1983-1992. He was also Dean of the Crete Deanery.

After months of intense suffering with cancer, God called Father Vic on December 23 to celebrate Christ's Nativity in eternity.

Despite the difficulty of traveling many miles on ice-covered roads, Bishop Fabian W. Bruskewitz, more than 70 priests, many relatives, parishioners and friends crowded into Sacred Heart Church to participate in the Mass of Christian Burial on December 28. In his homily, Father Nicholas Baker referred to a few of Father Vic's priestly characteristics including his unique sense of humor. He said, "Father Vic added a delightful humor to his role as a faithful priest and dedicated teacher."
Leslie V. Barnes was born on July 18, 1900, in Cresco, Iowa. He studied at Loyola University, Los Angeles, California; St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, Maryland; and St. Paul Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota. He was ordained on June 11, 1927, by Archbishop James J. Keane for the Archdiocese of Dubuque.

Accepting the invitation of Bishop Kucera, Father Barnes came to Lincoln in 1931 to serve as secretary for one year. Later he was named chancellor and superintendent of schools for the diocese. In 1935, he was named a Papal Chamberlain and in 1947 a Domestic Prelate.

From 1943-1948, Monsignor Barnes was a chaplain in the United States Army. While in the army, Capt. Barnes visited the military cemetery in Southern Italy and celebrated a Holy Mass for Sgt. Edward Glass who had been his neighbor in Cresco, Iowa. Msgr. Barnes referred to it as the richest experience of his life.

On February 12, 1950, Monsignor Barnes was appointed pastor of Holy Family Church, Lincoln and in 1958, he was named pastor of Cambridge. Three years later he was pastor of Saint Catherine, Indianola and Dean of the Indianola Deanery. In 1964, he began his duties as pastor of Friend.

Father John Kunkel was born March 24, 1893, in Verona, Missouri. He entered the Benedictine Order in 1919, and made his first profession of vows as a Benedictine on September 18, 1920. He was ordained to the priesthood on December 22, 1923, at Conception Abbey in Conception, Missouri.

Father John’s first assignment was as assistant pastor of St. Joseph Church, Springfield, Missouri. He served there until 1927.

When he returned to Conception Abbey in 1927, Father John was prefect and professor. From 1931-1950, he was pastor of St. Joseph Church, Parnell, Missouri.

On February 8, 1962, Father John was appointed chaplain of Madonna Home in Lincoln. He continued to serve at Madonna until December 14, 1963. Less than two weeks later, December 27, 1963, God called him to eternal life. He died in St. John’s Hospital, Springfield, Missouri.

Father John came from a family that was blessed with six vocations to religious life. His brother, Father Andrew, was also a Benedictine. He had four sisters who were members of the Congregation of the Most Precious Blood of O’Fallon, Missouri. They were Sister Ermelinda, Sister Mechtildis, Sister Pancratia, and Sister Theresa.
Raymond L. Wageman was born on March 30, 1903, in Havelock, Nebraska. He attended Saint Patrick School in Lincoln and Columbia Academy in Dubuque, IA. He completed his preparations for the priesthood at Kenrick Seminary in Saint Louis, MO, where he was ordained on June 9, 1929, by Archbishop John J. Glennon for the Diocese of Lincoln.

During the first three years of his priesthood, Father Wageman served at Saint Mary parish in David City. Subsequently, he was Pastor of Colon, Mead, Cedar Bluffs, Estina, Steinauer, Hebron, Friend, and Indianola. While he was Pastor in Steinauer, he was invested as a Domestic Prelate on December 22, 1949, receiving the title of Monsignor. His last assignment was in Valparaiso, where he remained until his retirement at the age of 85 in 1988.

In addition to his duties as pastor, which were always given priority, Monsignor was an amateur radio broadcaster and the pilot of his four-seater Cessna plane. His interest in ham radio began in the seminary. The long distance between parishes motivated him to get a pilot's license in 1950, however, the death of Father Navratil in the crash of his light plane in 1956, induced Monsignor to sell his plane.

One of the most memorable events in Monsignor's life was his appointment to Steinauer in 1940. The church had been sold on the steps of the courthouse in Pawnee County in 1938. Realistically, this meant he was assigned to a church which legally did not exist. With the wholehearted cooperation of the parishioners, the entire debt on the building was liquidated by 1946.

After Monsignor had been blessed with the rare privilege of 67 years in the priesthood, God called him from this life just two days after Christmas, December 27, 1996. In his homily during the Holy Mass of Christian Burial on January 2, 1997, Father Michael Christensen quoted a statement of Monsignor Wageman: "There is no relationship so close as the relationship of a priest with Christ."
Daniel Pohl was born in David City, Nebraska on May 24, 1926. He attended Saint Benedict College in Atchison, Kansas for study of the classics and philosophy, followed by theology instruction at Saint Paul Seminary in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Father Daniel Pohl was ordained at Saint Mary Church in David City on May 23, 1953 by Bishop Louis Kucera for the Diocese of Lincoln.

Father Pohl began his priestly ministry as Assistant Pastor at Saint Teresa’s in Lincoln (1953-1956); after a year of studies at Catholic University in Washington, D.C., he became the temporary Assistant Pastor at Blessed Sacrament in Lincoln (June-August 1957); and Assistant Pastor at Saint Joseph’s in York (1957-1959).

With Father Pohl’s next assignment came the distinction of being the first superintendent of Lourdes Central High School in Nebraska City (1959-1965), as well as chaplain of Saint Mary Hospital in Nebraska City. In 1965, he became superintendent of Saint Cecilia High School in Hastings for one year.

Between the years of 1966 until his retirement in 2002, Father Pohl enjoyed a rich and fruitful ministry as Pastor of parishes in Cheney, Paul, Dunbar, Rulo, Arago, Falls City, Brainard, Loma, Roseland, Juniata, Bruno, Abie, Saint Patrick’s in Lincoln, Friend, Milligan, and Indianola.

In 1996, Father Pohl was named a prelate of honor with the title of Monsignor. He retired from active ministry in 2002, and resided at Bonacum House until 2015, when he moved to Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital. Monsignor died there on December 27, 2015.

A rosary for Monsignor Pohl was prayed on December 30, 2015, at John XXIII Center chapel in Lincoln. The funeral Mass was celebrated by Bishop James Conley at the Cathedral of the Risen Christ on December 31, 2015. Monsignor Pohl was buried at Saint Mary’s Cemetery in David City.
Francis Smerke was born May 30, 1910 in Eveleth, Minnesota. He entered the Crosier Seminary at Onamia, Minnesota. As a seminarian, he was with the first group who came to establish the Crosier Monastery in Hastings in 1932. He was ordained June 6, 1936, by Bishop Louis B. Kucera in Saint Cecilia Church, Hastings.

After ordination, Father Smerke returned to Onamia to teach English in the minor seminary for three years. On July 27, 1940, Father Smerke was reappointed to the Diocese of Lincoln. For three years he served as pastor of Saint Joseph Parish in Friend.

Father Smerke spent most of his priestly life as a retreat master in New Mexico and Texas. He retired in Texas, but remained a conventual in the Hastings community.

In June 1986, Father Smerke observed the golden jubilee of his ordination to the priesthood. Six months later, December 28, 1986, God called him to eternal life. Funeral services and burial were at the Crosier Monastery in Hastings.

“My soul waits for the Lord, more than sentinels wait for the dawn.” Ps. 130:6.
Father Ignatius Wilkens, O.F.M. was born February 15, 1856. He joined the Franciscan Order and was ordained on December 21, 1878.

The Franciscans were given charge of Saint Francis de Sales Parish, Lincoln on January 1, 1892. It was a national church for people of German origin. Father Ignatius was the first Franciscan pastor of the parish. His companions were Father Peter and Brother Arnold.

Father Ignatius found forty families in the congregation instead of the two hundred that the Franciscans had expected. Two rooms in the basement were used for a parochial school.

There was no money in the treasury and many bills had been left unpaid. In addition, there were notes amounting to several thousand dollars that were due. It was a difficult situation that the Franciscans faced in 1892. They suffered many privations. In fact, the financial condition made it impossible for them to take any salary for the first twelve years.

Father Ignatius was a poet and a musician. Many of the hymns that he composed were used in the churches of Lincoln. He served as pastor until September of 1893.

After serving God as a priest for 56 years, Father Ignatius was called to his heavenly home on December 29, 1934.

“He asked life of you; you gave him length of days forever and ever.”

Ps. 21:5.
Luke L. Mandeville was born on September 10, 1890, in Elsie, Nebraska. He studied at Routt College, Jacksonville, Illinois; The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.; and Saint Bernard Seminary, Rochester, New York. He was ordained June 13, 1916, by Archbishop John J. Glennon at Kenrick Seminary for the Diocese of Lincoln.


On May 29, 1935, he was named a Papal Chamberlain. Three years later he was promoted to the rank of a Domestic Prelate. Monsignor Mandeville began his long term as Diocesan Consultor in 1932.

It was during the pastorate of Monsignor Mandeville that the church and rectory were destroyed by fire on May 10, 1961. Since health and energy were waning, Monsignor Mandeville retired leaving the reconstruction to his successor.

Monsignor Mandeville spent the last nine years of his life at Madonna Center. He died on December 29, 1970. Funeral services were at Saint Joseph Church, York, where he had been pastor for a quarter of a century.

At Monsignor’s golden jubilee in 1966, Bishop Casey said that the Jubilarian had always been “a good shepherd to his people.”
Andrew Henry Kunz was born on November 27, 1879, in Buffalo, New York. He studied at Saint Canisius College and Holy Angels College in Buffalo, New York; and at the University of Ottawa, Canada. He was ordained on June 17, 1905 in the Basilica of Ottawa by Bishop Dahamel as a member of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

Father Kunz was sent to St. Patrick Parish, McCook on May 15, 1913. Under his direction a school building was constructed. It was completed in 1919. Classes began in September 1918 using three rooms of the public school and one room in the basement of the rectory. At the beginning of the second semester classes were transferred to the new building. During the pastorate of Father Kunz, the missions of McCook included: Benkelman, Imperial, Palisade, Stratton, Thornburg, Trenton, St. Mary's, St. Ann's and Sacred Heart. After nine years, Father Kunz needed a less demanding assignment.

In 1922, Father Kunz was transferred to New York. He died on December 30, 1965 while he was pastor of Holy Angels Parish, Buffalo, New York.

Father Leander Schell, O.F.M. was born December 9, 1875. He was ordained as a member of the Franciscan Order on August 12, 1899. He served at Saint Francis de Sales Parish, Lincoln from 1899-1900. He died December 30, 1935.
Francis A. Lombardi was born, January 29, 1867, in Mileto, Italy. In order to please his father, a wealthy druggist, he studied medicine; in order to respond to God's personal call, he studied for the priesthood. While a student at the Gregorian University, Francis enlisted in the army. At age 20, he led an army of 14,000 soldiers in Ethiopia.

After recovering from the injuries of war, Francis completed his preparation for the priesthood and was ordained June 16, 1891. Father Lombardi volunteered to do missionary work in China where he suffered much during the Boxer Rebellion. After returning to Italy his mother died in a severe earthquake.

Father Lombardi came to the United States in 1908. While serving the Church in Oklahoma, he was struck on the hand by a copperhead snake. For 52 days he was semiconscious. In 1913, Father Lombardi came to the Lincoln Diocese. He served in Fairfield 1913-1920, Minden 1920-1926, Dawson 1926-1927, Roseland 1927-1935, Osceola 1935-1937, and Sutton 1937-1941.

Father Lombardi was gifted in art. He did some painting, made a wood carving of St. Agnes, and composed music. His artistic display of the Nativity in Roseland attracted visitors from great distances.

After fifty years in God's service, Father Lombardi was called to eternal life, December 31, 1941.
Joseph F. Bauer was born on April 18, 1877, in Moravia. He completed his studies for the priesthood in his native country and was ordained at Olomonoc, Moravia on July 5, 1902.

Father Bauer came to the Diocese of Lincoln on May 7, 1918. The parishes served by Father Bauer were: Bee 1918-1922, Bruno 1922-1931, and Touhy 1931-1937. He was incardinated into the Diocese of Lincoln on May 4, 1920.

Father Bauer suffered a stroke on December 8, 1937, and died at St. Joseph Hospital, Omaha on December 31, 1937.

Monsignor M. W. Nemec paid tribute to Father Bauer as an energetic and conscientious priest. He said that Father Bauer spent most of the last year of his life in a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, Rome, and Lourdes — an excellent preparation for death.

Bishop Kucera recalled that 35 years ago, Father Bauer had left his native Moravia and came as a missionary to the Czech people in the United States. Although he worked under hardships he remained faithful to his calling for the 35 years of his priestly life. He worked hard to advance the cultural and religious life of the people entrusted to his care. The Bishop said that Father Bauer had sacrificed his home, his relatives, the familiarity of his native land for his congregations. He invited all to come to him that he might minister to their spiritual needs. The Bishop concluded by asking the congregation to remember Father Bauer in their prayers.

The Pontifical Mass was celebrated at St. Vitus Church in Touhy and burial was in Saint Anthony Cemetery in Bruno.
Father Ildephonse Gast, O.F.M. was born August 27, 1881, in Louisville, Kentucky. He studied in Louisville, Cincinnati and in Oldenburg, Indiana. He was ordained June 20, 1907 by Bishop Denis O'Donaghue as a priest of the Franciscan Order. His early assignments were in Illinois and Indiana.

Father Ildephonse was sent to Lincoln on August 4, 1911, and appointed pastor of Saint Francis de Sales Parish. During his administration, a convent was purchased for $5000, a new pipe organ and bell were installed, the city streets were paved, and the buildings were wired for electricity.

In 1917, Father Ildephonse was transferred to Sacred Heart Church, Peoria, Illinois. After serving there for seven years, he returned to Lincoln and was again named pastor from 1924 to 1926.

In 1926, Father Ildephonse was sent to St. Louis Church, Batesville, Indiana, for two years and then assigned to Lafayette. He died at Saint Elizabeth Hospital in Lafayette, Indiana, on December 31, 1930. He had been ill for more than a year. Father Ildephonse was buried in Louisville, Kentucky.

At the time of his death Father Ildephonse was referred to as an "active priest and a fervent religious."
Father Lambert Brookman, O.F.M.Cap. was born October 6, 1905 in Cumberland, Maryland. He studied at St. Fidelis Seminary, Herman, Pennsylvania; St. Fidelis Seminary, Victoria, Kansas; and at Capuchin College in Washington, D.C. He was ordained June 19, 1932 in Immaculate Conception Shrine, Washington, D.C. as a member of the Capuchin Order.

Father Lambert served in Dover, Ohio 1932-1933; Frontenac, Kansas 1933-1935; Marienthal, Kansas 1935-1939; Herndon, Kansas 1939-1946; and St. Catherine, Kansas in 1946.

On March 24, 1946, Father Lambert came to the Diocese of Lincoln. For a few weeks he served Benkelman, Stratton and Haigler. His other assignments were: Cathedral, Lincoln 1946-1947, and Elsie 1947-1950.

After an illness of three weeks, Father Lambert died in Saint Mary's Hospital in North Platte, Nebraska, on December 31, 1950. The funeral services and burial were in Saints Peter and Paul Parish, Cumberland, Maryland. A Requiem Mass was also offered in Resurrection Church, Elsie, where he was serving as administrator at the time of his death.
Robert F. Sheehy was born November 11, 1922, in Hastings, Nebraska. He studied at St. John's Seminary, Little Rock, Arkansas, and at St. Francis Seminary, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He was ordained May 6, 1948, in Saint Cecilia Church, Hastings, by Bishop Louis B. Kucera.

Father Sheehy served for one year as assistant at St. Mary Parish, David City. In 1949, he registered at The Catholic University and was awarded a doctoral degree in Canon Law in 1952.

On returning to Lincoln, Father Sheehy was appointed vice chancellor, assistant chaplain at the Newman Center, diocesan master of ceremonies and diocesan director of the Legion of Mary. On August 27, 1960, he was named a Papal Chamberlain.

On June 20, 1962, Monsignor Sheehy was appointed director of the Newman Center and given charge of St. Thomas Aquinas Church. Six months later, December 31, 1962, cancer claimed his life at age 40.

As Monsignor Sheehy was dying, he whispered to one of his brother priests, “Oh how I wish I could offer one more Holy Mass.”

Bishop Casey said: “He had the spiritual vision that suffering is the highest form of love. He followed the suffering Christ gladly, not reluctantly.”
Joseph B. Smerke was born in St. Stephen, Minnesota, on October 6, 1912. His preparatory seminary studies were completed in Crosier Seminary, Onamia, Minnesota. In 1932 he continued his studies in Hastings. He was a member of the first ordination class in Hastings. Bishop Louis B. Kucera ordained him in St. Cecilia Church in Hastings, on June 6, 1936. His brother Francis was ordained on the same day.

In 1937, Father Joseph Smerke enrolled in the Catholic University of America, and received his Master's Degree in Philosophy a year later. Father Smerke also earned a degree in Sacred Music from the Gregorian Institute of America.

Manual labor was a part of his career. He helped to remodel and refurnish the building in Hastings in preparation for the opening of the seminary in 1939. When weather permitted he worked on the landscaping, and during inclement weather he painted and rearranged the interior.

In addition to teaching in the seminary and being Principal at Stepinaac High School in West Plains, New York, Father Smerke was Prior of the Monastery in Hastings from 1947 to 1953, and again from 1965 to 1971. Throughout his life as a priest and a religious Father Smerke served wherever he was needed.

At age 82 God called Father Smerke to his eternal reward on the last day of the year 1994. Bishop Fabian W. Bruskewitz was present at the Holy Mass of Christian Burial on January 4, 1995.