

Msgr. O'Brien Succumbs at 101

BUFFALO — The Rt. Rev. Msgr. Richard O'Brien, believed to be the oldest active Roman Catholic priest in the world, died today in Sisters Hospital at the age of 101.

He had suffered a stroke about a week ago.

Msgr. O'Brien was pastor of Annunciation Church on the city's West Side, a position he had held since transfer from Immaculate Conception Church at Wellsville in 1927.

American Priest Continues Efforts To Free Hostages

By JORGE CANELAS

ORURO, Bolivia (AP) — An American priest resumes his efforts today to win release of four Americans and other hostages held by Bolivian tin miners demanding that the government free two Communist mine union leaders.

Msgr. Andrew A. Kennedy of St. Louis, Mo., said he would disregard government warning that it would be risky for another American to enter the miners' stronghold.

Bolivia's dissident Vice President Juan Lechin, leader of the rebellious miners, assured the priest Thursday night he could go in safely to the Catavi-Siglo Veinte area, 30 miles south of Oruro, where the miners are holding the hostages.

In La Paz, the capital, about 5,000 workers marched through the streets Thursday night shouting denunciations of President Victor Paz Estenssoro and "American militarism."

The demonstrators demanded the release of the two union

Born in the village of Albion, he studied at St. Michaels College in Toronto under the Basilian fathers. He completed studies for the priesthood at Assumption Seminar, Windsor, Ontario, and was ordained Dec. 21, 1895, at the age of 33.

Following service in Buffalo, he was transferred to Wellsville in 1900, remaining for 27 years.

Msgr. O'Brien during his Wellsville tenure, was responsible for the erection of Immaculate Conception School in 1912; enlarging the Sacred Heart Cemetery; establishing St. Rita's Society for women and a Young Boy's Club. He also organized the Lyceum, a social club for unmarried couples.

He was appointed dean of Allegany County parishes and in 1922 was made a domestic prelate with the title of Right Reverend Monsignor by Pope Pius XI.

Msgr. O'Brien celebrated his golden jubilee in December, 1945, with appropriate ceremonies. Further honors came to him in 1953 when Pope Pius XII raised him to the rank of Prothonotary Apostolic, enabling him to offer Pontifical Masses.

Parishoners paid him tribute on the occasion of his 100th birthday, holding an open house in the Annunciation Memorial Hall.

He remained active until his illness, offering daily Masses, working at his desk and greeting parishoners.

While at Wellsville, he undertook to personally deliver report cards to all Immaculate Conception pupils, a practice he continued at his parish here.