

Led San Pedro Parish From 1946 to 1975

Msgr. Scott of 'Fishermen's Church' Dies

By BURT A. FOLKART, *Times Staff Writer*

Msgr. George M. Scott, longtime pastor of Mary Star of the Sea Church of San Pedro—known as “the fishermen’s church”—has died at age 83.

The last surviving son of Joseph Scott, once Los Angeles’ best-known attorney, died Sunday at San Pedro Peninsula Hospital.

From 1946 until his retirement in 1975, Scott led a parish that included thousands of Italian and Croatian fishermen and their families.

When Scott arrived in San Pedro he found only a decaying frame church, built in 1899, a vacant lot and

an old school. There was, however a singular outstanding exception, a bronze statue of the Virgin Mary, which faced the sea.

The fishermen, he explained in a 1961 interview with *The Times*, had managed to set aside from their often meager tuna-catch earnings the \$7,000 cost of the tribute.

Scott eventually directed the building of a new convent, an elementary school and high school, an auditorium and a new church.

The complex cost \$2 million and it was quickly paid down to \$300,000, a tribute to the dedication of his parish.

The Los Angeles archdiocesan newspaper *The Tidings* reported that Scott, who was ordained in 1925, was educated at his father’s school in England, St. Cuthbert College, and enrolled at Notre Dame University in South Bend, Ind., before entering the seminary in Baltimore when he was 16.

After studies in Rome, he returned to Southern California and served at nine parishes in Los Angeles and San Diego before assuming the pastorate of Mary Star.

There he found a community of 10,000 Croatians and 5,000 Italians, most of whom were still earning their living from the sea.

He said that his initial problem was to encourage the older men to embrace the type of faith they wanted instilled in their wives and children.

He encouraged the building of altars on fishing ships and asked the tuna fleet skippers to pass along their religious beliefs to their crews.

Scott is survived by two sisters and numerous nieces and nephews, among them two priests.



Msgr. George M. Scott of San Pedro in 1961