

RELIGION

Father Irwin to St. Augustin's

After 14 years as a priest in Mississippi, the Rev. Michael Irwin returned to his hometown of Des Moines on sabbatical leave last fall and this month was appointed associate pastor of St. Augustin's Catholic Church, 545 Forty-second St.

Irwin was a 1961 graduate of Dowling High School and studied at Immaculate Conception Seminary in Conception, Mo.; the University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.; and Rockhurst College, Kansas City, Mo., before his 1970 ordination in Mississippi. He taught six years at St. Aloysius High School in Vicksburg and seven years at Cathedral High School in Natchez. His academic speciality is American history. But his parochial school teaching experience included religion, economics, government, journalism, history and English — plus a brief stint as an assistant principal. He says his main duty in that administrative post was to "collect fines from gum chewers and smokers."

He had assisted at St. Augustin's since last October and this month was appointed as assistant pastor by Bishop Maurice Dingman.

Irwin said he went to Mississippi from "idealistic motives" during a time of social change in the deep South. He said he returned to Iowa because "my roots are here, my family is here and the Church in Iowa has been very good to me."

Irwin was raised in the Holy Trinity parish where his parents, W.L. and Mary Irwin, are members.