

# **Obituaries**

## **The Rev. John Haligowski**

Funeral services for The Reverend John Haligowski, who died on April 1st in San Antonio, were held on the 5th of April, 1988, in the Church of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary Panna Maria, TX. The Reverend Bernard Goebel was celebrant of the Mass. Among those present were the Reverend Michael A. Guman, the representative of the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings and some 20 members of the Polish Association of Priests in Texas. Burial was in the local cemetery.

The Reverend John Haligowski was born in Strzyzow, Poland, on the 14th of January, 1908. He was ordained a priest in the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist for the Diocese of Przemyśl on the 29th of June, 1932. He served briefly as an assistant in four parishes before being drafted into the Polish Army as a chaplain in 1939. That same year with the defeat of the Polish forces, he was taken prisoner by the Russians. He escaped after eight days and was associated with the Polish Underground Movement until his arrest by the Gestapo in 1942. He was imprisoned in several camps including the infamous ones at Auschwitz and Dachau.

Father Haligowski was eventually liberated by the American forces April 27, 1945. When freed he was in several displaced person camps located in Germany. He came in contact with Monsignor Kaiser of the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings who was at that time a Director of War Relief services of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. Through the efforts of Monsignor Kaiser he

obtained permission to emigrate to this country under the auspices of the Ordinary of the Diocese of Great Falls, the Most Reverend William J. Condon.

Father Haligowski was first assigned as an assistant in Saint Matthews Parish in Sidney. Five years later he was appointed administrator of Saint Victor's Parish, Hilger, and Chaplain of Saint Joseph's Hospital, Lewistown. He was also for a brief time in charge of Saint Mathias Church, Moore. In 1961, Saint Joseph's Parish, Big Timber, was placed in his hands. Father Haligowski remained the head of that parish until his retirement in July of 1978. Besides his pastoral duties he found time to hear the confessions of those Polish people who were more at ease in the Polish language, particularly in Billings, Lewistown and Great Falls. He was also the sponsor of a number of his countrymen who wished to emigrate. After his retirement, he resided first in California, later moving to San Antonio, Texas where he lived out his final days.