

# Rev. Frederic Nelson dies, known for his Catholic conservatism

## Associated Press

POWERS LAKE, N.D. — The Rev. Frederic Nelson, 64, whose following shared his adherence to the structure of the traditional Roman Catholic church, was found dead Saturday morning in a Williston motel, his death attributed to natural causes after an autopsy.

His funeral will be this week at a time still to be determined in the Sacred Heart Chapel of the St. Olav Guest Home at Powers Lake, which he founded. Thompson-Larson Funeral Home of Powers Lake has charge of arrangements.

A native of Portland, Ore., Nelson was ordained a priest in 1950 at Bismarck. He was an assistant pastor at New England and at St. Leo's Parish in Minot before being named pastor of St. James Parish in Powers Lake in 1953.

In the years that followed, Nelson

established in the Powers Lake Parish a parochial educational system through the junior college level, a home for the aged, a shrine and related facilities, all in keeping with his philosophy of an earlier, more conservative Catholic church.

In time, his staunch beliefs brought him into conflict with Bishop Hilary Hacker of the Bismarck Diocese. In 1970, when miniskirts became fashionable, Nelson refused to allow women whose knees or heads were not covered entry into the church.

Ultimately, Hacker called for Nelson's resignation, and the Powers Lake priest since had been on his own.

In 1984, after the new Code of Canon Law that embraces the work of the 1963 Vatican II Council went into effect, Nelson was censured by Bishop John Kinney, who succeeded Hacker as bishop of the diocese. Nelson then was forbidden to administer

the church's sacraments.

He had continued to function as a priest in accordance with his own beliefs, his practices including the celebration of the Tridentine Mass used by the Roman Catholic Church from the time of the 16th Century Council of Trent until the Second Vatican Council.

Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre of Switzerland, who in June defied the Vatican and consecrated four bishops of his traditional movement, visited Nelson's National Shrine of Our Lady of the Prairies at Powers Lake in 1971.

A trained musician with a master of music education and doctorate degrees, Nelson had devoted much of his life to music. In earlier years, he organized boys' choirs and other choral groups and had promoted several young boys in the development of their vocal talent.