

OBITUARIES

Msgr. John A. Cross Of Glen Cove Parish

Glen Cove—Monsignor John A. Cross, 88, who was pastor of St. Patrick's Parish in Glen Cove from 1934 to 1950, died yesterday in his home at St. Therese of Lisieux Parish in Brooklyn.

Although Msgr. Cross was Irish, he was known to many as "The Italian Priest" because he spoke perfect Italian. He had been pastor emeritus at St. Therese since 1967, when he retired after serving for 17 years.

He first went to St. Patrick's in 1933 as associate pastor, then served briefly in Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish in Inwood before returning to St. Patrick's as pastor.

Cross, a native of Brooklyn, was graduated from St. John's University and studied for the priesthood at North American College in Rome, where he was ordained in 1916. A classmate of his was Francis Spellman, later to become cardinal of the New York Archdiocese.

The Rev. Rudolph Macek, associate pastor of Good Shepherd Parish in Brooklyn, said Cross was a fan of the New York Giants football team. Patrick O'Brien of Glen Cove, who was an altar boy for Cross at St. Patrick's, said, "He would always take a whole group of us altar boys and the choir in to see the Giant game at the Polo grounds. He would drive us there in his car. Of course, we were always misbehaving in the car. I think that's why we said

the rosary in the car on the way back."

O'Brien said Cross was strict with his altar boys and choir. "He demanded a lot of the people who were part of the liturgy of the church. He really demanded that they do their jobs perfectly—if not, you might get belted. But the perfection of the Church and the beauty of the final result of his orchestration of the service was one of the things we remember. And you didn't mind getting belted if the end result was that beautiful."

Macek said Cross was also an opera buff, and that the late Milton Cross, who used to announce the opera broadcasts on Saturdays from the Metropolitan Opera, was a distant cousin of the monsignor.

O'Brien said Cross loved to sing Italian arias. "One of the enjoyable times we had was when we went to Westbury Manor, when that trio of musicians would come around and he would sing Italian arias with them. He sang 'Santa Lucia' very well."

He will be reposing at Glen Funeral Home on Avenue D in Brooklyn until 7:30 PM tomorrow. A concelebrated mass will be said at 8 PM tomorrow at St. Therese's. On Thursday at 10 AM, a Mass of the Resurrection will be concelebrated by the Most Rev. Francis J. Mugavero, bishop of Brooklyn. Burial in Holy Cross Cemetery.

—Laura Durkin