

Pastor of Historic Church Marks 25th Anniversary

Father Klauder Noted For Long Service at Century-Old Edifice In Tonawanda

First and only successor of the Venerable John Neumann in the tiny stone Church of St. John the Baptist in Englewood Avenue, Town of Tonawanda, the Rev. Charles A. Klauder will celebrate 25 years of service in the priesthood June 13.

Father Klauder has devoted the past 16 years to the pastorate of this oldest church in Western New York, built about 1845 by the man who later became bishop of Philadelphia and at whose tomb many miracles are declared to have been performed.

After Father Neumann left Western New York, this historic landmark, though much visited by tourists, was used only occasionally, since St. Joseph's Church in Main Street served most of the people who formerly attended the chapel.

Father Klauder, starting his religious career in St. Joseph's Church in 1918 had his eye on Father Neumann's little missionary church. His father often had told him of seeing and listening to the bishop. A native of Philadelphia, Father Klauder was educated in the school of St. Peter's Church there, where Father Neumann is buried.

When Father Klauder became pastor of the congregation of 35 families in 1927 he said: "We will in time build a larger church and a school and priest house, but the chapel will never be altered." In 1928 a rectory was built; in 1931, a school. The school was enlarged in 1940 and the auditorium converted into a church to seat 500. The John Neumann Chapel is used for week-day masses, weddings and funerals.

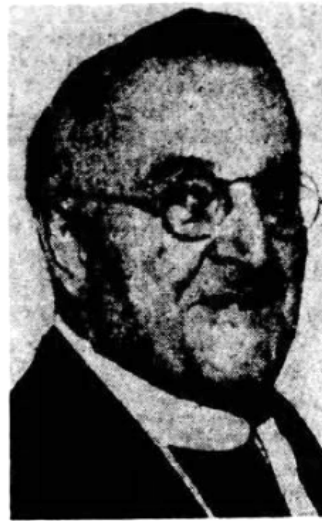
Father Klauder worked with his father in the leather-manufacturing business until he entered the seminary at Belmont College, Belmont, N. C., when 33.

The 62-year-old priest when he began his work in St. Joseph's Church had charge of St. Agnes Training School and was chaplain of the Erie County Poorhouse. In 1920 he was made an assistant at St. Mary Magdalene Church and in 1925 became assistant at St. Rose of Lima Church.

Father Klauder has two sisters in holy orders, Sister Mary of St. Verena in Good Shepherd Convent, Reading, Pa., and Sister Mary Madge of Visitation Monastery, Wilmington, Del. He has two uncles and two nephews who are priests.

Clergymen from all parts of Buffalo Diocese will join in the 25th anniversary celebration, which is on Pentecostal Sunday, the same Sunday Father Klauder celebrated his first mass in 1918. A solemn high mass will be sung at 10 o'clock and the Rev. Joseph T. Murphy, S. J., of Philadelphia, an old friend of Father Klauder, will preach.

Presides Over Oldest Western New York Church



REV. CHARLES A. KLAUDER