

Msgr. O'Brien Is Dead At 101; Funeral Monday

The Rt. Rev. Msgr. Richard O'Brien, PA, 101-year-old pastor of Annunciation Church, Grant and Lafayette, died Friday morning in Sisters Hospital. He suffered a stroke in the church rectory Sunday, Dec. 1.

Msgr. O'Brien, the oldest active parish priest in the United States and possibly the world, was 101 last Sept. 1. He was a resident of the Buffalo diocese under all 10 of its bishops.

He had been a priest for 68 years, the last 36 as pastor of



The Rt. Rev. Richard O'Brien

Annunciation. He founded Annunciation High School.

Msgr. O'Brien was born Sept. 1, 1862 in Albion. He was the son of Irish immigrant parents, the third born of five boys and a girl.

Studied In Toronto

After his early education at Albion, Msgr. O'Brien began his

studies for the priesthood at St. Michael's College, Toronto, and completed them at Assumption Seminary, Windsor, Ont.

He was ordained Dec. 21, 1895, at the age of 33, and offered his first Mass in St. Joseph's Church, Albion. His first assignment was as assistant pastor at St. Columba's Church, Buffalo.

He was transferred to Blessed Sacrament parish, now New Cathedral, in 1899. In 1900 he was appointed pastor of Immaculate Conception Church, Wellsville, and dean of Allegany County, a post he held for 27 years.

Philosophy: 10 Commandments

In 1922, he was made a domestic prelate by Pope Pius XI with the title of right reverend monsignor. In 1927, Msgr. O'Brien, then 64, was assigned to Annunciation. Pope Pius XII appointed Msgr. O'Brien a prothonotary apostolic in June 1953.

Funeral Services

Diocesan priests will chant the Office of the Dead at 3:30 Sunday afternoon in Annunciation Church.

A Solemn Pontifical Mass of Requiem will be sung for Msgr. O'Brien at 10:30 Monday morning in Annunciation Church. The Most Rev. James A. McNulty, bishop of the Diocese of Buffalo, will be the celebrant. A diocesan priest choir will assist in singing the Mass.

Burial will be in St. Joseph's Cemetery, Albion.

Msgr. O'Brien attributed his long life in part to his mother's cooking while he was a boy in Albion. He summed up his philosophy by advising that people live by the Ten Commandments and be their brother's keeper.