Silver Jubilee Marked By Father Cunningham

A pleasant surprise greeted the Rev. Patrick Cunningham, pastor of Our Lady of Prompt Succor church in White Castle, last Sunday when the 25th anniversary of his ordination was marked by the community.

The silver jubilee celebration was a complete surprise to Father Cunningham, as parishioners had kept the plans a secret from him.

The event began Sunday afternoon at 4:30 with a high mass at the church.

Father George Barbier, assistant pastor of St. John the Evangelist Catholic church here, directed the choir.

Immediately after the church services a civic reception at which some 300 persons turned out was held in the White Castle High school gym.

Father Cunningham is a native of Ireland and as he entered the gymnasium, the band played "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling." Music was furnished by a local band, the Merry Makers.

I. M. Gauthier, master of ceremonies, made a few remarks, and little Joe L. Hebert presented Father Cunningham with a purse from the parochial school children. Margaret Campesi, prefect of the Senior Sodality, presented him with a spiritual bouquet from the congregation.

Bert Dugas presented him with a round trip plane ticket to Ireland plus a purse to cover expenses of a two-month vacation. Johnny Latino presented a congratulatory message from Mayor Joseph Sciortino and the city council. Bill Chadwick was the featured speaker of the evening. The acceptance of the many fine gifts of appreciation was made by Father Cunningham. People in the audience greeted and congratulated him individually after the formal ceremonies. Following this several selections were played by the Merry Makers.

Father Cunningham was born and reared in Kerry County Ireland, attended the seminary in Dublin, but the last two years of study for the priesthood was completed in Baltimore, Md. He was ordained in St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City in 1929.

He will not be able to go back to his home in Ireland until next summer due to pressing church work. Father Cunningham had been in White Castle only a couple of months when the old church burned. The new church was just dedicated on September 19. He came to White Castle from a parish in New Orleans.

Post South (Plaquemine LA), October 39, 1954