



The Rev. Casimir E. Kuszewski 1912-1963

The eulogy for the late Father Kuszewski, beloved pastor of St. Theresa's church, printed herewith, was prepared by Miss Catherine Lane.

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Rev. Casimir E. Kuszewski arrived in Eagle on June 1, 1955 to become pastor of St. Theresa Catholic Church. On Saturday morning Dec. 14, 1963 he was found dead in his bed.

On Sunday Jan. 29, 1956 Rev. Kuszewski called a meeting of the parish to vote on the question of building a parochial school. After much discussion a vote was taken and the result was unanimous in favor of the school. On Monday morning Jan. 28, 1957 the school was finished and ready for occupancy.

After the parish voted to build a school, the priest appointed eight men to the building committee. All sections of the parish were represented by these men. These men went from house to house, taking a census and soliciting donations. The priest borrowed money and that meant that on March 1 and Sept. 1 of each year \$5,000 or \$10,000 for the year had to be paid.

Each society of the church stepped up its activities. Dinners, suppers, luncheons, bake sales, card parties, dances, movies, rummage sales and paper drives were held. The women did an enormous amount of sewing, knitting, making dolls and toys and driftwood novelties to be put on sale at the dinners. Two big dinners were given twice a year, a beef dinner in July and a turkey dinner in September. There were 2,108 beef dinners sold on July 5, 1962. The gross income from these dinners and to give of encourage people to work on these dinners and to give of their time and labor, the priest wrote in one of the Bulletins, that we get every Sunday, "When you give to the church you give to God." "No one shall appear with his hands empty before the Lord-Deut. 16:16."

Father Kuszewski felt that children should be trained to contribute to the support of the church. To get them started he worked with them. The priest and some of the eighth grade boys secured a truck and went from house to house collecting furniture for a rummage sale.

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The priest, himself, with the help of the boys, carried out chairs, tables, stoves, beds, a refrigerator and other furniture.

Then the children began collecting bottle caps — Pepsi-cola, Teem, Uptown, Graf's root beer, Diet-Rite and Roxa. A truck was placed on the school grounds for a week and the children went to homes collecting papers and magazines. People brought to the truck, old carpets, rags, iron tin, copper and other junk. The proceeds from a Penny Carnival, junk collections and bottle caps enabled us to purchase a chord organ for the school. Father Kuszewski suggested to the children that the Life of Christ in film strips would be a wonderful addition to the school. They are working on that, now.

There was an enormous amount of time and effort given to the material welfare of the parish. But the priest saw to it that very much more time and effort was given to the spiritual welfare of the parish. Our church is not required to have Mass on Thanksgiving Day. But Father Kuszewski said Mass every Thanksgiving Day to express our gratitude to Almighty God for all His favors.

Father Kuszewski liked people, both Catholic and non-Catholic and they liked him. He was not one of those who think that only Catholics go to heaven. On one of the Bulletins we read that Helena was the mother of Constantine the Great, the first Roman emperor to permit the Church to come out of the catacombs and preach the Gospel openly. Helena lived from about the year 250 to 330. But only today is she given due credit for her services to God and His church and much of the credit stems from the studies of a Protestant minister who doesn't hesitate to call Helena, Saint.

Father Kuszewski's greatest contribution to God was the erection of Saint Theresa's Parochial School. He spent a great deal of time at the school, instructing the children, playing with them on the playgrounds, encouraging and inspiring the saintly Sisters who have dedicated their lives to the proper upbringing of children. Standing in the sanctuary, before the lectern, he admonished the parents in forceful tones to be watchful concerning the morals of their children. He warned them that the summer vacation was a time to be particularly watchful. He some-