

Msgr. Richard T. Crean

'GREATER LOVE THAN THIS...'

Vice chancellor, chancellor, vicar general, Cathedral Rector, domestic prelate, Prothonotary Apostolic—that was Msgr. Richard T. Crean, but to him, the greatest title was **Parish Priest**.

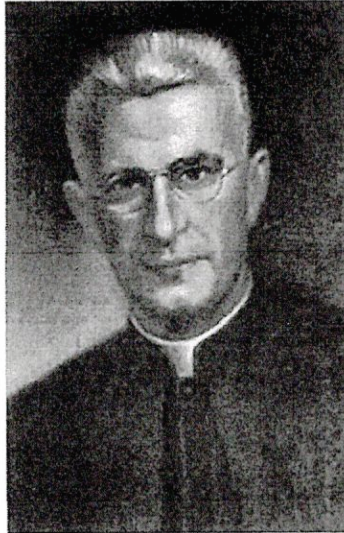
For him all the tasks entrusted to him by the four Bishops of Trenton under whom he served, to Msgr. Crean, the spiritual and, at times, material welfare of the flock given into his charge as pastor was something for which he always found time.

His life was ended as he had lived - sacrificing for others as he ran through the Cathedral Rectory early on the morning of March 14, 1956, as flames swept through the building, giving the alarm to the others sleeping there.

Born in Camden October 24, 1901, Msgr. Crean attended Camden Catholic High School and St. Joseph's College, Philadelphia, and at both starred on the basketball teams.

He completed his studies for the priesthood at St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, and was ordained June 2, 1928, in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Newark, by the late Archbishop Thomas J. Walsh, then Bishop of Newark.

Fr. Crean was assigned as assistant at St. Peter's Church, New Brunswick, where he served from June 21, 1928, to October 14, 1929, when he was assigned by Bishop John J. McMahon to the Cathedral as an assistant and as vice chancellor of the diocese.



On the following January 1, Fr. Crean was appointed diocesan director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. On the appointment of Bishop Moses E. Kiley, later Archbishop of Milwaukee, to be fifth Bishop of Trenton, Fr. Crean was reappointed vice chancellor and diocesan Propagation director.

On August 8, 1938, Fr. Crean was named chancellor of the diocese, succeeding Msgr. Thomas U. Reilly, who became vicar general, and after the death of Msgr. Reilly in 1953, Bishop George W. Ahr appointed him vicar general.

On March 1, 1940, Pope Pius XII named Fr. Crean a domestic prelate, with the title of right reverend monsignor, and in October, 1948, the Holy Father made him a Prothonotary Apostolic, the highest honor a priest can receive short of being made a bishop.

At the investiture ceremonies, the late Bishop William A. Griffin said of Msgr. Crean: "Msgr. Crean's work among the priests of the diocese will stand as a monument. His Holiness has conferred this honor upon no other priest in the world who deserves it more than Msgr. Crean."
(**The Monitor**, March 20, 1959)

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Their spiritual director from formation of the Mercer County Federation of Holy Name Societies in 1940 until his death, the men of the federation have sponsored a Mass annually for the repose of Msgr. Crean's soul, followed by a breakfast or brunch, proceeds from which help to finance scholarships in his memory—grants to deserving high school graduates continuing their education.

So it is today that we revere his memory by remembering him at Mass; we perpetuate his memory through the medium of scholarships.

May he rest in peace!