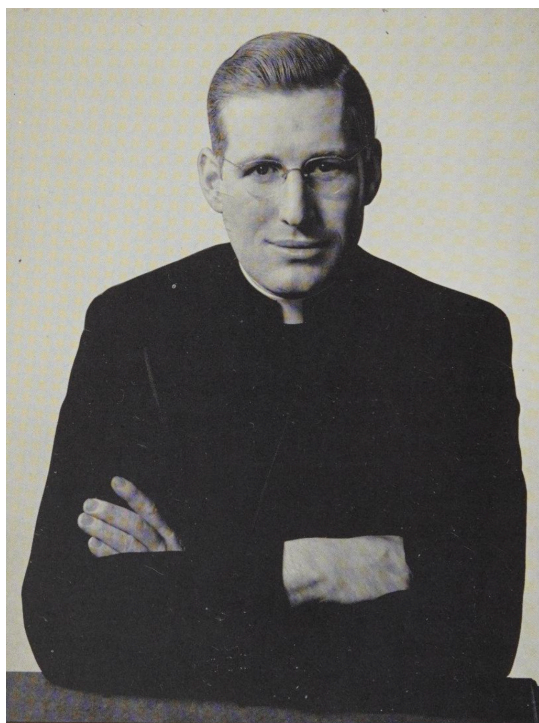


Biography • Monsignor John Patrick O’Connell (1918-1960)



Monsignor John Patrick O’Connell of Chicago died on 20 February 1960. Born in Chicago on 12 January 1918, O’Connell made his preparation for the priesthood at Quigley Preparatory Seminary and at St. Mary of the Lake Seminary of the Archdiocese of Chicago. He was ordained a priest on 1 May 1943 by SAMUEL ALPHONSUS CARDINAL STRITCH, who in 1955 published *Legislation on Sacred Music* in the archdiocese of Chicago. The cardinal even ‘outlawed’ certain pieces of music, such as Schubert’s “Ave María”; the English song “I Love You Truly”; and Reginald De Koven’s “O Promise Me” from his 1890 opera, *Robin Hood*.

After assignments in the parish ministry—principally at *Immaculate Conception Church* in Highland Park, Illinois, under Msgr. Joseph P. Morrison—O’Connell was named editor of the *Catholic Press of Chicago* by Cardinal Stritch. This last assignment (held at the time of his death) embraced the two concerns of his whole priestly life: viz. Holy Scripture and the Sacred Liturgy. His day-to-day work included the preparation of English editions of the HOLY BIBLE and of the ROMAN MISSAL, which together suggest the range of his interest and influence. Among students of Sacred Scripture, Msgr. O’Connell was a respected writer, speaker, and exegete.

He is known for his contributions to the liturgical apostolate in the USA and (more especially) to the LITURGICAL CONFERENCE. As early as 1946, Msgr. O’Connell served as Secretary of the LITURGICAL CONFERENCE and editor of the *Proceedings* of that year’s Liturgical Week. In the academic field, Msgr. O’Connell held the degrees of Master of Arts and Doctor of Sacred Theology. Yet his serious

and exacting study did not prevent him from being a popular speaker, editor, and writer. This was of course evident both in the many talks he gave at liturgical weeks, at clergy conferences, and other occasions, and in the spread of popular reading of Holy Scripture through his editorial work. One instance of his concern for popular liturgical participation was the appearance in 1959 of a weekly “Missalette” prepared by him for the participation of the faithful in the Sunday worship of the Christian community.

The story of Msgr. O’Connell’s death, although told in other places, should be repeated here. When he learned in January of his grave illness, he met the news with complete resignation and only worked harder, even from his hospital room, at the many tasks he had before him. Day by day he conducted his correspondence, attended to the many affairs of his priestly assignment, and completed—as far as possible—his work for the 1960 LITURGICAL WEEK. On the very morning of his death, he continued to work and then, conscious that he had only a short period to live, he began the recitation of the prayers for the dying with another priest. While reciting these prayers, he paused and raised himself from his bed and spoke his last words: “Come, Lord Jesus. Come, Lord Jesus.”

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