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A Story of St. Cyprian Parish in Columbus

by Margaret E. Mooney

Part I -- The Bishop and the Saint

Columbus residents over fifty years old, especially “East-Enders,” might know that when they turn north from 1492 East Broad St. at the wall signed, “OHIO STATE MEDICAL CENTER EAST,” they are approaching a memory. Once, on the site of the O.S.U. Hospital, stood the old four-story brick St. Anthony Hospital on eight acres on the northwest corner of Hawthorne and Taylor Avenues. Bishop James J. Hartley dedicated St. Anthony’s on November 22, 1891 and it was operated by the Sisters of the Poor of St. Francis for the next 100 years. Bishop Hartley in his book, *Diocese of Columbus: The History of Fifty Years: 1868-1918*, wrote, “The people of Columbus ought never to forget all that St. Anthony’s Hospital does for the poor and the sick. No one is ever refused admittance - and all receive the best of care.”

Perhaps there are a very few residents that now can tell the story of the three brick buildings on the south side of Hawthorne Ave., across from the hospital grounds. The first, 1413 Hawthorne Ave., is still proud and cared for. The second at 1407, and the third at 1405, need care and seem to stand empty. All are now the property of Ohio State Medical Center...but...their story needs to be remembered.



St. Cyprian convent, on Hawthorne Avenue

There is a two volume history of a very strong group of dedicated women, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, titled *Sharing the Bread in Service: Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, 1891-1991*, by Sister Patricia Lynch, S.B.S. The original name of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament Sisters included “for Indians and Colored People,” for their work has always been with these two groups.

In Volume I, there unfolds a most intriguing story that tells about those three brown brick buildings on Hawthorne Avenue. It begins like this: “A poor working girl had left Bishop James J. Hartley her savings to build a church where the Colored

might feel at home, and be drawn to the Faith.” To build a Church...WHERE THE COLORED MIGHT FEEL AT HOME...the phrase is a haunting one, one that leads to authentic research and realistic reflection.

Is it possible to reflect that the “poor working girl” had been prompted to save, and to then donate her savings because she had observed, in some diocesan Church where the well-to-do worshipped, or the Irish, or the Italians, or the Germans, where, maybe “the Colored” were drawn to the music, or by the bells, or by the beauty of the building, to come in to visit, and ...were promptly made to feel unwelcome, even asked to leave?

A fine, elegant, African-American Catholic, living in the Grandview community today, Mrs. Ethel Jennings, tells of being a young woman in a group that was invited by a friend of her mother’s to attend her Catholic parish church for Sunday Mass on the Feast of St. Anthony. They were told that there would be a special blessing and distribution of the Bread of St. Anthony, and a lovely procession. These well dressed, youthful African-American Catholics were greeted by stares and frowns as they sat down. The ushers paced the aisles. Finally, the young people were asked to leave, and told to “go to their own church.” Msgr. Patrick Kilgallen, then pastor at St. Cyprian’s, heard of the incident from Ethel’s mother, Mrs. Minnie Patterson Calloway, wife of Mr. Lott Calloway. Msgr. Kilgallen called Bishop Hartley, who informed the other pastor that, in the future, he should remember that ALL CATHOLICS WERE WELCOME in ALL CATHOLIC CHURCHES.

In 1893 Bishop Hartley, then an alert 37 year old priest, and Mother Katharine Drexel, also 37, and foundress of her two-year-old religious order, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored People, very likely would have read reports of The Catholic Congress of Clergy and Laymen, also called “The Columbian Catholic Congress,” held in conjunction with the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

There Charles H. Butler spoke on behalf of “The Colored Catholic Congress.” He warned fellow Catholics that “the Negro has been a conspicuous figure in our body politic and, like the ghost in Macbeth, “It will not down.” The future depends on “whether the proud Anglo-Saxon intends to dispossess himself of mere race prejudice and accord his black brother simple justice.” He attacked civic discrimination and segregation in churches, then finished with an appeal: “I here appeal to you, first as American citizens, second as loyal sons of our Holy Mother the Church, to assist us to strike down that hybrid monster, color prejudice, which is unworthy of this glorious republic. We ask it not alone for charity’s sake, but as a right that has been dearly paid for.”

The well informed Catholic leaders knew, as Archbishop John Ireland did, that neither the official church nor individual Catholics were outspoken in their zeal for racial justice... with vigorous exceptions like Archbishop John Ireland, who, in 1891 demanded action to “blot out the color line.” He said it was no longer possible to keep up a wall of separation between whites and blacks.

In southern communities, black Catholics attended segregated churches and schools, or found themselves relegated to church galleries. They approached the communion rail after the whites and confessed their sins in segregated confessionals. Some of these external signs of discrimination were missing in the North, but there the realities of Catholic life for black people were in many cases even less pleasant.

Surely our Catholic people should have understood how it felt to be ostracized, having themselves been shunned not long before. Still, one feels less “at home” among obviously negative worshippers, especially if they out-number you. In those years before 1911-12, integration had not happened. At St. Cyprian’s there was a strong sense of belonging, of becoming a leader and learning ways of rising above rejection to the dignity and refinement of an educated person. It was possible to become an

effective leader at St. Cyprian's...and beyond.

Bishop John J. Hartley was known for getting things done. A man who loved generously, helping those in need stemmed from his own down-to-earth, working class beginning. His parents were married at Columbus St. Patrick Church and soon moved to Davenport, Iowa, most likely to "better themselves financially." Then there was a financial panic which caused them to return to Columbus, to settle on Maple Street, where the family lived above Mr. Hartley's saloon. James was born in Iowa in 1858, and, surely not, (as the Irish so often said), surely not "with a silver spoon in his mouth."

And so "the poor working girl's letter" with which we began, and the money she left to Bishop Hartley, might have been an answer to his prayer. (In the 1910s thousands of Afro-Americans came to Columbus from the South. That's when the first segregated congregations of various denominations started. Bishop Hartley no doubt noted their plight.) Perhaps the letter prompted the youthful, fifty-three year old Bishop to put his bold plan in action, when, in 1911, he first contacted Mother Katharine Drexel, who herself was a woman of action, with money to give flesh to her plans, and a most generous spirit.

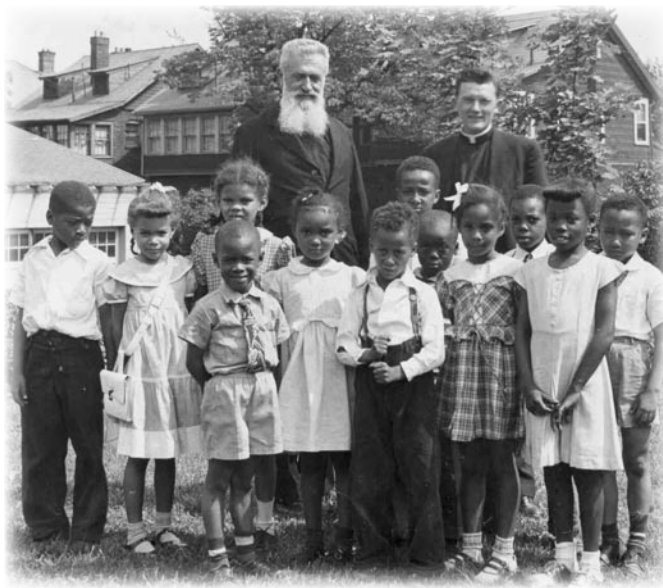
Catherine Drexel and her sister Elizabeth, (Katie and Lise) lost their mother, Hanna Jane, five weeks after Catherine was born. (Katharine was her name in religion, Catherine, her baptismal name.) The extended families reached out to Francis Drexel and his girls. The widower with two little girls

wisely married a most remarkable woman, Emma Bouvier, ten years his junior. Three years later a third little girl, Louise, was born. Their life, full of fun and opportunity, had Emma's example, when, three afternoons a week, there were lines of those who were welcomed in as Emma listened to their needs and gave them the means to obtain what was needed. "This parental training provided direct application of the parents' principle that their wealth was to be shared with the less fortunate." Katie Drexel loved the schoolroom where she and Louise were taught at home by tutors under Mrs. Drexel's supervision. Kate continued to learn all her life. Her bountiful and empathetic nature continued in her life as a foundress and keenly

perceptive Mother Katharine. She researched requests with balanced and wise management of only the interest from a great fortune.

It was 1879 when Mrs. Emma Drexel became ill with cancer. Kate acted as her special nurse. "Don't let the poor have cold feet," Emma said as she died. Their father, Francis Drexel died suddenly in February, 1885. With both

parents gone the girls grieved. Francis had left an estate of fifteen and a half million dollars. In his will he left a tenth of his estate to be distributed among 29 churches, schools, orphanages and hospitals in Philadelphia. The income of the remaining estate of fourteen million dollars was to be divided equally among his three daughters. On their deaths, the income would go to their children. If the three daughters died without issue, then the estate would be dissolved and the principal would go to those charities to which he had given a tenth of his estate at death.



The visiting Father Superior of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Fathers with some of St. Cyprian's children, about 1950

This arrangement served Mother Katharine very well as she met the needs of so many Indian and African-American peoples over her very long life. Phyllis McGinley, in her keen and witty book *Saint-Watching*, predicted, rather, insisted, in 1969, that Mother Katharine be made a Saint. "For saints... come in a variety of shapes and sizes, and casts of mind. But I have never encountered a STINGY one." McGinley then tells of Mother Katharine, "lavishing her inheritance on neglected Indian children of our own era" (and serving the spiritual and educational needs of African-American children) is a candidate for sainthood because of "her very American brand of holiness." She had stamina and kindness. "She EXISTED for the sake of doing good." Knowing that her father's will stipulated that she could use only the interest on the fortune, not the capital, for everything was to return to the estate on her death, she set out obstinately to live as long as she could! Mother Drexel was a firm-minded woman and needed that money for her charities. When she died in her nineties, the family wealth had been used for more than seventy years to serve her Indian and Negro children. As Phyllis McGinley would say, "Never underestimate the stubbornness of a woman or a saint!"

Here begins an account of the formation of St. Cyprian's Parish as recorded in the Annals of The Blessed Sacrament Sisters, recorded, one should suppose, by the Community's Archivist at the time of the negotiations between Bishop Hartley, Mother Katharine Drexel, and her order's Council. One is struck by the business acumen of Mother Katharine in the year 1911. The Bishop was planning to build a chapel ... "and add a two-room school," and said that, if the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament could send him three or four Sisters, he would build a convent and support them. The Council agreed to send the Sisters and to contribute funds towards the combined church and school.

* Final plans called for a school with the addition of two rooms, one large one for a chapel, and another for Sunday-school classes.

* This would cost \$8,000 and the Bishop estimated

that the Convent would cost \$4,400.

* The Council agreed to pay for the convent and by June the Bishop was able to dedicate the foundation, which he reported would be one of the best in the city.

* All the Colored of the area attended the dedication, though there were only one or two Catholics among them.

* Although the building was of brick, Mother Katharine, ever prudent, took over the insurance payments on the buildings.

* Mother returned home and "told the Sisters to pray for the mission we're asked to open in Columbus."

* The close interest and cooperation of Bishop Hartley was to be an important aspect in this venture. It went far beyond seeing that the buildings were there and that the Sisters had a place to stay when they arrived. Mother Katharine appreciated the warm interest and zeal the Bishop had for the salvation of the Colored.

But she knew that others might not be as missionary-minded toward the Colored as Bishop Hartley so, as she did whenever she opened a new foundation, she asked the Bishop to subscribe to certain conditions in his name and that of his successors, an agreement commonly signed between bishops and religious congregations coming into a diocese. Six months before the Sisters arrived, when Mother Katharine agreed that her order would staff the mission, she sent the agreement to Bishop Hartley. It included assurance that the constitution approved by Rome "be the sole rule of the new foundation; that decisions about changes in personnel be in the hands of the Mother General; and that the household arrangements 'be in the hands of the community alone.'" There followed a list of spiritual conditions including having the Blessed Sacrament reserved in the convent, the appointment of a regular confessor, daily Mass at St. Anthony Hospital etc. ("till the St. Cyprian Chapel was ready.")

Financial arrangements stipulated a salary of \$200 a year for each Sister and the payment of coal,

gas, water, and repairs and school supplies. The money was to be taken from appropriations to the diocese from the sums given to the Bishop by the distribution committee of the Negro and Indian Bureau, or by the Catholic Board for Work among Colored People.

That account in the Sisters' annals states: "In what she deems essential, Mother Katharine left little to chance." She also came ahead with two Sisters to prepare for the arrival of the teaching sisters, urged the workman to finish, bought furniture and equipment, and visited homes in the area recruiting students. Then Mother Katharine went on to Chicago "to open a new foundation there."

"By the time of the first commencement, though it was very uphill work, they saw the need for a larger school." "Once again the building followed joint planning, and once again Bishop Hartley thanked Mother Katharine for 'the generous donation for the new building.'"

By 1951 there were about 500 Catholics in the parish and 175 in the school. On the surface, things seemed to be going well, when one Sunday at Mass St. Cyprian's parishioners were told that beginning the next week they should go to St. Dominic's Parish for Mass. There had been no previous announcement or discussion with members.

Prior to his death in 1957, Bishop Ready, considering population changes and the proximity of the two churches, and their financial condition, and after discussion with the diocesan consultants, had on March 25 decreed the perpetual union of the two parishes, as equals, implying that St. Cyprian Parish would continue to exist along with St. Dominic. (Many of the Irish members of St. Dominic Parish had moved away when the Pennsylvania Railroad shops closed.) This union of the parishes was to be announced in the two churches on March 27. Bishop Issenmann put the union into effect in the summer of 1958, merging the two parish schools. The chapel at St. Cyprian remained in use for some time, though

not for Sunday Mass, but it finally closed after being vandalized. Bishop Issenmann reimbursed the Sisters for their early financial contributions to the buildings at St. Cyprian's, which came as quite a surprise to their Mother Superior. Her reply implied that the order then was in financial straits, at least relative to their position in those early days of Mother Katharine and her inheritance.

The sudden closing of St. Cyprian Church for Sunday Mass, and then the school, was quite a shock to the parishioners, one from which the faith of some never recovered. Former pastor Father John O'Neil in 1925 had noted that some years earlier Bishop Hartley had written to Mother Katharine that the parish property was "so fixed that it would always be kept up for the work among the Colored People of Columbus." Most people no doubt had assumed this permanence, until the spring of 1957.

The Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament moved to the united school at St. Dominic's, and soon the "union of equals" was forgotten. The Sisters continued to teach at St. Dominic's school until it was consolidated with two other parish schools in 1970. The closing sentence of Sister Patricia Lynch's narrative implies the sadness of the Sisters: "Other missions the Sisters opened in 1912 provided a more abundant harvest."

1944: Bishop James J. Hartley died on 12 January at age 85, succeeded by Bishop Ready.

1955: Mother Katharine Drexel died on March 3rd, at the age of 96.

1957: The union of St. Cyprian and St. Dominic parishes was announced on March 27.

1957: Bishop Ready died on May 2 at age 64.

The pastors of St. Cyprian Parish were:

- Father John H. O'Neil, 1912-1916

- Father Peter B. Kelly, 1916-1917

- Father John T. Goetz, newly ordained, 1917-1919

- Monsignor Patrick J. Kilgallen, 1919-1946

- From 1946, the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, priests from Belgium who were pastors at St. Dominic Parish, also were pastors at St. Cyprian.

(To be concluded)

Chapel Hill, Perry County

Baptismal Records 1840-1850

(Continued, from Vol. XXIX, No. 8)

1849 *continued...*

June 4 [C], Charles, son of William D. Bartlett and Laevia A. Clark, born May 15; spons. Samuel Workman and his wife CD

June 10 [SC], Timothy, son of Simon Cummisky and Mary Farrell, born June 7; spons. John Cunningham and Ann Skinnin CD

June 18 [MC], Mary C., daughter of Basil Hoy and Rachael Roberts, born June 15, 1848; spons. John Clark and Margaret Hoy CD

July 1, Patrick, son of Patrick Hines and Sarah Pluck, born Mar. 31; spons. Patrick Hockran and Elizabeth Hook Cornelius Daly

July 15 [SC], John, son of Thomas Monahan and Margaret OMealy, born July 12; spons. Michael Monahan and Bridget Fagan CD

same day, Peter, son of Hugh Donnelly and Josllina? Duffy, born July 1; spons. Michael Malin and Mary Duffy CD

same day, Joseph, son of Eli Wise and Hanna Mipuber? [or Mysuber?]; spons. Andrew Souders and Catharine Chose CD

July 18 [SC], Thomas, son of Thomas Fox and Susan Hinny?, born June 4; spons. Andrew Masterson and Alice Skinnin CD

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July 22 [MC], William, son of William Sees? and Rosanna Dehertz?, born June 17; spons. James Clark and Margaret Been? CD

July 23 [MC], James, son of Daniel Dimond and Mary McGahan, born July 8; spons. Patrick Dimond and Margaret Blessington CD

Aug. 5, William, son of William Bennet and Mary Fitzimmons, born Aug. 2; spons. Richard Bennet and Ann Carroll CD

Aug. 10 [MC], Henry, son of George Riffle and Ann Hoy, born Aug. 3; spons. Martin --umoth [Thumolt] and Mary Mc--am CD

Aug. 12 [MC], Rachael Rebecca, daughter of Herman Whitcraft and Elizabeth Brady, born June 17; spons. Patrick and Elizabeth Keenan CD

Aug. 15, Mary, daughter of James Gormly? and

Ellen Murtagh, born Aug. 9; spons. Bryan and Ann Gurlay? CD

Aug. 19 [A], Frances M., daughter of William Edwards and Phronica Finley, born July 22; spons. Isaac Lambery and Ann Finley CD

Aug. 26 [MC], William, son of Francis Donnelson and Rachael Griffin; spons. Thomas Grogan CD

Aug. 29 [MC], Julia A., daughter of William Gordan and Catharine Keenan, born Aug. 13; spons. Patrick and Mary Keenan CD

Sept. 2, Michael, son of Thomas Hochran and Bridget Mitchel, born Aug. 22; spons. James --- and Ann Currin CD

Sept. 20 [D], Bridget, daughter of Thomas Bradock and Ellen Lawrence, born Sept. 17; spons. William Bradock and Sarah Forker? CD page 41

Oct. 8 [MC], John, son of Jacob Kinkleberry [Cantlebury in census] and Elizabeth McGahan, born Sept. 6; spons. Thomas Conlan and Margaret Dyke CD

Dec. 27 [SC], James, son of John Skinnin and Mary Smith, born Dec. 17; spons. John and Mary Skinnin CD

1850

Jan. 20 [SC], Mary, daughter of Michael Mahoe [Maher at Apr. 12, 1846] and Mary Rafferty, born Oct. 21; spons. Thomas McEvoy and Elizabeth Ward CD

Jan. 21 [MC], Alexander, son of John McDonald and Catharine McGery, born Jan. 12; spons. John and Ellen Keenan CD

Jan. 30 [MC], Ann, daughter of Nathaniel Dickens and Judith Panopar, born Jan. 12; spons. Martin and Mary Thunolt [i.e. Thumolt or Dumolt] CD

same day, James, son of Edward Grogan and Julia Keenan, born Jan. 24; spons. Cornelius Daly and Elizabeth Keenan CD

Feb. 17 [SC], John, son of George Bennet and

Ann Carroll, born Jan. 21; spon. Robert and Mary Bennet CD

same day, Rose, daughter of William Goulding and Livia Win, born Feb. 6; spon. John Goulding and Bridget Haughran CD

Mar. 15, Margaret, daughter of John Donohoe and Mary McGravy?, born Jan. 25; spon. James and Anastasia Whelan? CD

Mar. 16 [SC], Margaret J., daughter of Matthew McGovern and Frances Walpole, born Mar. 3; spon. Patrick and Margaret Walpole CD
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Mar. 17, Michael, son of Bryan Farrell and Julia Conway, born March 3; spon. James Farrell and --- ---- CD

same day [SC], Bridget, daughter of Skinnen and Mary A. Walpole, born Mar. 8; spon. Bartholomew McDonald and his wife CD

Mar. 24 [MC], George, son of Thomas Flowers and Mary Doherty, born Feb. 28; spon. John Keenan and Jane Little CD

same day, Mary C., daughter of James Edington and Catharine Hoadlet?, born Feb. 20; spon. John Hoadlet? and Sarah? Hoy CD

same day, Elizabeth, daughter of Michael Rae?? and Mary Keenan, born Feb. 11; sons. Daniel and Margaret Gordan CD

Mar. 27 [D], James Francis, son of John Winer and Abby Longstreth, born Mar. 29; sons. James Longstreth and Eliza Rei? CD

Apr. 7 [D], James, son of James Winer and Janice Gosman, born Aug. 28; spon. Peter ---- and Barbara ---- CD

same day, Lucinda Ann, daughter of -- Deaver and Ruth Pearl, born Aug. 17; spon. Anthony Gosman and Mary Pearl CD

same day, Sarah E., daughter of Philip Longstreth and Ann Gangor?, born Feb. 4; spon. Stephan Brosmer and his wife CD

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Apr. 16 [SC], Mary, daughter of Michael Mulligan and Elizabeth Walpole, born Mar. 25; spon. Matthew Walpole and Alice Martagh? CD

the following day, Mary, daughter of John Mitchel and Ellen Shannon, born Apr. 2; spon. Thomas Haughran and Ann Fagan CD

in May [SC], Martha, daughter of Michael Mallin

and Alice Murtagh, born Apr. 14; spon. Patrick Fagan and Helen Mallen CD

at the same time, Elizabeth, daughter of Patrick Haughran and Catherine Masterson, born Apr. 23; spon. Andrew and Rose Masterson CD

Aug. 4 [June crossed out and August inserted above it] [SC], Ellen, daughter of James Martin and Ann Masterson, born July 9; spon. Patrick Haughran and Mary Skinnin CD

12th [of June or August?] [SC], Mary A., daughter of Peter Carroll and Ann Walpole, born June 10; spon. John and Catharine McCabe CD

Aug. 17 [SC], Mary, daughter of Nicholas Kily and Mary Barnett, born Aug. 5; spon. John and Mary McCarthy CD

Aug. 1 [MC], William, son of Basil Gordon and Sarah? McCormick, born Mar. 4; spon. William and Ann Gordon CD

July 14, John?, son of Peter Keaton and Mary Stiley, born May 25; spon. John Hanigan and Margaret Conlan CD

Oct. 5, James, son of Michael Turner and Ann Cunning, born Sept. 15; spon. Bryan Turner and Ann Cummisky CD

Oct. 6, Bernard Joseph, son of Henry Houfer and Margaret Friel, born Sept. 10; spon. Patrick Masterson and Catherine Coyle CD

Oct. 21 [SC], Hugh, son of John Gaulden and Sarah A. Dannelly, born Sept. 2; sons. Hugh and Mary Dannelly CD

[The next series of records, by Dominican Fathers J. V. Daly, S. A. Clarkson, and --- Edelin, though they give month and day of birth, do not give the date of the baptism, only the year 1851 or 1852.]

Please Note:

On page 158 of the August edition: The cut-off of the last sentence of Mr. Sheward's note was a technical hiccup. It should read:

He was a native of Kenmare, county of Kerry, Ireland.

Monsignor Kilgallen and St. Cyprian Parish



Patrick Joseph Kilgallen was a native of Pittsburgh, but transferred to the Diocese of Columbus in 1917 while a student at Mt. St. Mary's Seminary, Emmitsburg. He was ordained on January 25, 1919 by Bishop Hartley. His first assignment was at St. Vincent's Orphanage and his second, October 26, 1919, was as Pastor of St. Cyprian's Parish and Chaplain of St. Anthony's Hospital. He served as pastor until 1947, 28 years of the 46-year life of St. Cyprian as a separate parish.

About 1944 Father Kilgallen developed diabetes, which afflicted him for three years until diet finally brought it under control. In 1947, while recovering, he visited St. Augustine's Seminary at Bay St. Louis, Miss. He was "deeply impressed by the Colored scholastics and the Colored Brothers," whom he found well grounded in the spiritual life. He visited Curtis Washington, who was to be ordained the next Spring and noted him "a splendid candidate for the Priesthood. All the Fathers praise him." He described Washington as "handsome, refined, earnest and reverential."

Kilgallen was a co-founder of the Midwest Clergy Conference on Negro Welfare and its president from

1945 to 1948. He was named a Domestic Prelate in November, 1946 by Pope Pius XII.

In his acceptance of Monsignor Kilgallen's resignation as Pastor of St. Cyprian's on August 4, 1947, Bishop Ready wrote, "The love of the good people at St. Cyprian's and of this whole community of Columbus testifies to the Christlike quality of your ministry."

In addition to his duties as pastor and chaplain, Father Kilgallen served as the first diocesan Director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith (1920-1947), chaplain and moderator of the Catholic Women's League (1922-1930), and Confessor of Religious (probably both for the sisters at the hospital and those at the parish).

In 1950 he made the Diocesan Pilgrimage to Rome for the jubilee year. He then toured Ireland, where he had a chat with Mr. de Valera and with Senator Margaret Pearse, visited the grave of Father Matt Talbot, and visited Knock.

In 1963 he retired as Chaplain of St. Anthony Hospital. Bishop Issenmann wrote to him, "You have my lasting thanks for your long service... God alone knows how many sick have been influenced by your attention and helped spiritually by your priestly ministrations." He remained at the hospital, where he died on March 5, 1966.