



DIOCESE *of* LACROSSE  
OFFICE OF THE CHANCERY  
DIOCESAN ARCHIVES

*With hope in the power of the resurrection, we commend to the Lord*

**THE MOST REVEREND JOHN JOSEPH PAUL, D.D.**

The Most Reverend John Joseph Paul, 87, Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of La Crosse, died on Sunday, March 5, 2006, at Franciscan Skemp Mayo Health System, in La Crosse, Wisconsin, where he had been in residence since September 2004. Prior to that and since his resignation as Bishop of La Crosse which was accepted on December 10, 1994 he resided at Holy Cross Diocesan Center, 3710 East Avenue South in La Crosse.

Born on August 17, 1918 to Roland P. and Louise (Gilles) Paul in La Crosse, Bishop Paul was the eldest son among a family of ten children. He attended St. Joseph Elementary School and Aquinas High School in La Crosse. A Bachelor of Arts Degree was received from Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa in 1939. Having completed a Bachelor of Sacred Theology degree from St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, he was ordained to the priesthood by Auxiliary Bishop William Griffin on January 24, 1943 in Maria Angelorum Chapel of St. Rose Convent in La Crosse. A Master of Education degree was conferred on him by Marquette University in Milwaukee in 1956.

Bishop Paul's early priestly service was given at St. Patrick Parish in Eau Claire where he was assistant pastor while also assuming the role of instructor and athletic director at St. Patrick High School from 1943-50. He became principal at Regis High School in 1950 and directed the building of that school.

In 1955 Bishop Paul was appointed the third Rector of Holy Cross Seminary in La Crosse. The following year he was given the title of Right Reverend Monsignor by Pope Pius XII. In 1965 he was named Vicar General by Bishop Frederick Freking and later in 1966 he was named the Rector of the Cathedral of St. Joseph the Workman and Secretary of the Civil Corporation for the Diocese of La Crosse. On May 17, 1977 he was appointed to be the Auxiliary Bishop of La Crosse and consecrated as a bishop at St. Joseph the Workman Cathedral by the Most Reverend Bishop Frederick W. Freking, then Bishop of La Crosse, on August 4, 1977.

A multitude of responsibilities were carried out by Bishop Paul. He taught religion to the sixth and seventh grades at St. Joseph Cathedral School; he was a member of the Aquinas

Foundation, the Elks, the Knights of Columbus, the Equestrian Order of the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher, the boards of the Red Cross and Bethany-St. Joseph Home and the country club. In 1969 he was named to the Board of Diocesan Consultors. As Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese, he was released from his responsibilities at the Cathedral and was named Vicar for Religious, Director of Pastoral Planning, and clergy personnel director in 1977 and 1983 respectively.

Upon the retirement of Bishop Frederick W. Freking, Bishop Paul was appointed Bishop of the Diocese of La Crosse on October 17, 1983. His installation as bishop on December 5, 1983 was presided over by Archbishop Pio Laghi, Apostolic Delegate to the United States. In his initial statement as bishop, he said: *In my ministry as Bishop of La Crosse, I will have only one desire – to do all in my power to proclaim the Lord Jesus Christ and his gospel in word and deed.* One of Bishop Paul's first activities as bishop was to call the Fourth Diocesan Synod in 1986 to implement the provisions of the 1983 Revised Code of Canon Law. This called for a diocesan infrastructure of consultative bodies and commissions which would be designed around the themes of sacred worship, family life, justice and peace, and education. He cherished seeing the Church in operation -- laity, women and men religious, deacons, priests and bishop -- praying, discussing, planning and looking to the future. The decrees of the Fourth Diocesan Synod entitled *The Bishop With His People* were promulgated on May 1, 1987.

Bishop Paul's resignation as the Diocesan Bishop of La Crosse was accepted by Pope John Paul II on December 10, 1994. He was then elected to be the diocesan administrator until his successor Bishop Raymond L. Burke was installed on February 22, 1995.

Preceding Bishop Paul in death were his mother Louise and his father Roland, two brothers, William and Joseph, and two sisters, Ruth Gianoli and Catherine Condes. He is survived by two sisters, Mary Ann Bartel of La Crosse and Louise (Donald) Schams of Little Rock, Arkansas, three brothers, Ray of La Crosse, Patrick (Arlene) of Des Plaines, Illinois, and James of Griffith, Indiana, a sister-in-law, Carol, of La Crosse, and many nieces and nephews.

**Visitation** will be held at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph the Workman in La Crosse from 2:00 to 8:00 pm on Thursday, March 9, 2006, with **Evening Prayer** being celebrated at 7 pm. **Morning Prayer** will be celebrated at 9:00 am on Friday, March 10, 2006 at the Cathedral. The Most Reverend Jerome E. ListECKI, Bishop of La Crosse, will preside at the celebration of Evening Prayer and Morning Prayer.

The **Mass of Christian Burial** will be held at on Friday, March 10, 2006, at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph the Workman in La Crosse beginning at 11:00 am. The Most Reverend Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, will be the main celebrant, with The Most Reverend Jerome ListECKI, several other archbishops and bishops, and the priests of the Diocese of La Crosse as concelebrants. A reception will follow at the La Crosse Center.

Memorials may be sent to the Bishop John J. Paul Scholarship Endowment Trust, the Franciscan Skemp Foundation Inc., and the Aquinas Foundation.

*May he rest in peace!*

The Diocese of La Crosse