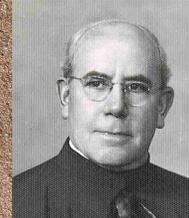


THESE
are our brothers



Guiding the Flock: The Life of Father Charles McNabb

Father Charles McNabb's life was not without its fair share of adventure, such as his service to the Canadian Army as chaplain from 1940-1945. Yet, despite his work overseas, he spent most of his career faithfully serving his flock within the diocese. Such devoted service happens often, but is rarely credited. Yet Father McNabb's work is a reminder to all that there are many ways to serve, and they are all important.



Charles McNabb was born in June 1905, to Napoleon and Marie Louise McNabb, in St. Thomas, Ontario. He was one of twelve children. Faith ran deep in his family: two of his older brothers, Albert and Wilfred, also entered the priesthood later in life. His early schooling was at Holy Angels School in St. Thomas, before attending Assumption College in Windsor, and later, St. Peter's Seminary. During this time, he achieved a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy. He was ordained on May 21, 1932, by Bishop John Thomas Kidd.

The next eight years were spent serving as Assistant Pastor at three different Windsor parishes: St. Alphonsus (1932-1933), Holy Rosary (1933-1936), and Immaculate Conception (1936-1940). In 1940, he became full-time assistant to Father O'Rourke as a chaplain in the Canadian Army, a position he held for the next five years. He eventually succeeded Father O'Rourke when he went overseas as Chaplain of the Canadian Armed Forces, and attained the rank of Major.

After the war, in 1945, he spent some time in the Byron Sanitarium. Deciding a change of air would help, he went to visit his brother, Father Wilfred McNabb, in Red Deer, Alberta. While recovering his health there, he became assistant pastor as Sacred Heart Parish in Red Deer (1945-1946), before returning to the Diocese of London as assistant pastor at St. Francis Xavier Parish, in Tilbury (1946-1947).

For the next twenty-three years, he was an administrator (1947-1950), and pastor (1950-1970), at St. Rose of Lima Parish in Windsor. The length of this appointment made him the parish priest for multiple generations of parishioners, and he was remembered fondly by many. His final appointment (1970-1975) was to Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, also in Windsor, after which he retired. He died on July 1, 1994, after being in the priesthood for sixty-two years.

Father McNabb's life shows that service to God need not be grand, but can be accomplished by small acts of devotion.

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