

Msgr. John Slowey, 68, dies

The Rt. Rev. Msgr. John D. Slowey, a Roman Catholic Church leader remembered for his ministry in helping youth, refugees and the needy, died Thursday at St. Joseph Medical Center in South Bend, Ind. following a brief illness. He was 68.

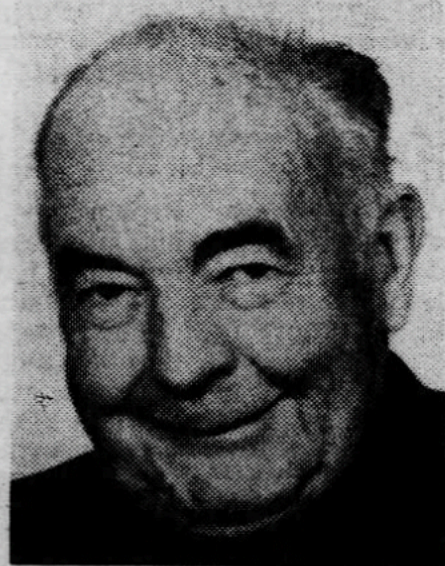
Slowey, pastor of St. Mary's Church in Niles since 1966, was the first director of Lansing's Catholic Social Services, and founder of the Michigan Big Brother movement, an organization for fatherless boys.

"Msgr. Slowey, along with Msgr. Earl Sheridan, were the ones primarily responsible for the inauguration of Catholic Social Services in the Diocese," said the Rev. Donald Eder, communications director for the Lansing Diocese.

"There was nothing until John got it all started. Now we have eight social service agencies across the 10-county diocese.

"And he was also one of the moving forces in establishing the St. Vincent Home," Eder said. "He was just one of those individuals that was always there to help those who couldn't make it on their own."

Slowey was born Sept. 13, 1914 in Albion, the great-grandson of the Thomas Sloweys, the first Catholic couple to settle in Albion in 1845.



Msgr. John Slowey

He graduated from Albion High School and attended Sacred Heart Seminary in Detroit and St. Mary's Seminary in Norwood, Ohio.

He was ordained at St. Mary's Cathedral in Lansing on May 18, 1940, the first Albionite to become a Roman Catholic priest.

Slowey served parishes in Dowagiac, Flint and Coldwater, and was a former chaplain in Percy Jones Hospital in Battle Creek. After serving as assistant pastor in a Flint parish, he earned a master's degree in social services from Catholic University in Washington, D. C.

Slowey became the first di-

rector of Lansing's Catholic Social Services in 1949 and also served as chaplain at the St. Vincent Home for Children. During this time, he also helped to establish the Big Brother movement.

In 1959, Slowey was elevated to the rank of Monsignor by the late Pope John XXIII in a huge, citywide reception which drew more than 1,000 guests to St. John Student Center.

Slowey was named to the first Michigan Committee on Aging by former Gov. G. Mennen Williams.

During 1959 and 1960, the monsignor directed the Cuban Refugee program. He traveled to Miami, Fla. and brought children back to Lansing where they were placed in the St. Vincent Home until their parents could care for them.

Slowey was named priest of the Niles parish in August, 1966. In May 1980, he celebrated the 40th anniversary of his ordination into the priesthood.

Slowey is survived by a sister, Barbara Bank, of Glen Burnie, Md., and two brothers, William E. Slowey, of South Bend, Ind., and Wendell C. Slowey, of Camarillo, Calif.

Services will be at 11 a.m. Tuesday at St. Mary's Catholic Church in Niles. Arrangements are by the Halbritter Funeral Home in Niles.