

THE DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE SESQUICENTENNIAL



Bishop
William R. Griffin
1935-1945

AUXILIARY BISHOP OF LA CROSSE

William R. Griffin was born in Chicago on September 1, 1881. He was ordained a priest for the Archdiocese of Chicago on May 25, 1907. While Bishop McGavick was in Chicago, Father Griffin served as his secretary and accompanied him to La Crosse for his installation. Upon returning to Chicago, Fr. Griffin served in various ministries until he was appointed Auxiliary Bishop of La Crosse by Pius XI on March 9, 1935. He was elevated to the episcopacy on May 1, 1935 in Chicago and arrived in La Crosse later that month with enthusiasm and dedication. Of particular interest to him was the spiritual, physical

and cultural development of the youth in the Church. His enthusiasm for the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) was felt throughout the diocese, bringing young Catholics together for liturgies, sports, and social events. He was a strong supporter of Catholic education at all levels. It was because of his encouragement that the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration expanded their two year St. Rose Junior College. His presence at diocesan meetings and functions underscored his faith and zeal in living and spreading the Gospel to all. When his health failed, his illness was a heavy cross that he carried without complaint. He died in office on March 18, 1944.