

Waters, Vincent Stanislaus ^[1]

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by Grady L. E. Carroll, 1996

15 Aug. 1904–3 Dec. 1974

Vincent Stanislaus Waters, *Roman Catholic* ^[2] prelate, was born in Roanoke, Va., the son of Michael Bernard, a railroad machinist, and Mary Francis Crowley Waters. He attended St. Andrews School (1911–20), *Belmont Abbey College* ^[3], Belmont (1920–25), St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore (1926–28), and North American College, Rome, Italy (1928–32). On 8 Dec. 1931 he was ordained to the priesthood at North American College. Waters was assistant pastor of Holy Cross Church, Lynchburg, Va. (1936); chancellor of the Diocese of Richmond (1936–43); and director of Diocesan Missions Fathers and work with Trailer Mission (1943–45). Appointed bishop of Raleigh on 10 Mar. 1945, he was consecrated on 15 May and installed on 6 June. The Diocese of Raleigh covered 52,000 square miles.

The Most Reverend Vincent S. Waters, who traveled widely in North Carolina, founded the *North Carolina Catholic* (1947) and the North Carolina Catholic Laymen's Association, which later included the "Confraternity of Christian Doctrine." He made wide use of motor chapels. At his invitation two orders of Carmelites founded convents in eastern and western parts of the state. In 1953 he issued a pastoral letter ordering racial integration in Catholic churches in the diocese. He made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1959 and participated in the sessions of Vatican Council II, the twenty-first general council of the Roman Catholic church.

The holder of an honorary doctor of divinity degree, the churchman was selected "Tar Heel of the Week" by the *Raleigh News and Observer* in 1964. In 1961 he had moved into Little Maryknoll, the new residence of the bishop of Raleigh at 600 Bilyeu Street (formerly the episcopal residence had been at Sacred Heart Cathedral on McDowell Street). He was six feet two inches tall, dignified, genial, scholarly, and a good public speaker. In early years he had been a member of the *Appalachian Trail* ^[4] Club.

In 1972 the Diocese of Raleigh was divided: the forty-six western counties became the Diocese of Charlotte (under the supervision of Michael J. Begley), and the fifty-four easternmost counties remained in the Diocese of Raleigh.

Bishop Waters died five days before the Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration and Solemn Commencement of the 1975 Holy Year, held in December 1974. His funeral was at Sacred Heart Cathedral, Raleigh, with interment in the city's Memorial Park.

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