

Father David Bellinghausen

December 31 is the anniversary of the death of Father David Bellinghausen. Gerald Raymond Bellinghausen was born August 31, 1939, in the rural community of Rhineland, Texas. He was the ninth youngest in a family of 10 children, three girls and seven boys. His elementary education was under the Olivetan Benedictine Sisters at St. Joseph Parochial School, followed by four years of secondary education at Rhineland High School where he graduated as valedictorian of the class of 1957. He attended one year of college at North Texas State University in Denton, Texas, before coming to Subiaco Abbey as a candidate for the Benedictine brotherhood on January 17, 1960.

Jerry Bellinghausen professed his vows as a monk of Subiaco Abbey on August 15, 1961, receiving the name David. For nearly two decades Brother David worked primarily as a linotype operator, printer and manager of the Abbey's print shop until its closure in 1981. In addition, he was for a time a Christian Doctrine instructor at nearby Scranton, Arkansas, worked on Search programs, Marriage Encounters and in various retreat activities.

Discerning that God was calling him to take a further step, Brother David began his studies for the priesthood at St. Joseph Seminary College in St. Benedict, Louisiana, and Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans.

Graduating Cum Laude with a B.A. degree in religious studies and philosophy in 1983, he entered the Pontifical College Beda in Rome, Italy, for his theological studies, while living at Collegio Sant' Anselmo, the international Benedictine center in Rome. Brother David had the unique privilege of serving as deacon of the Lenten Mass celebrated by Pope John Paul II on Ash Wednesday, February 22, 1986, at Santa Sabina Church in Rome, receiving the blessed ashes from the hands of the Holy Father.

Brother David completed his theological studies for the priesthood with honors in June 1986. Returning to Subiaco Abbey, he celebrated his 25th anniversary of monastic profession at a Mass offered by Abbot Raphael De Salvo on August 10, 1986.

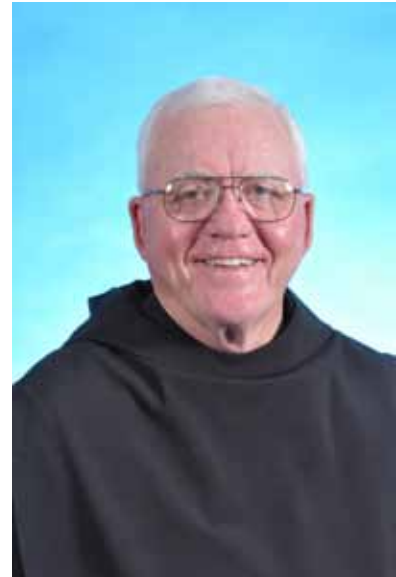
On the Solemnity of All Saints, November 1, 1986, Deacon David Bellinghausen was ordained to the priesthood at Subiaco Abbey by Bishop Andrew J. McDonald of Little Rock.

For the next two years he was on the faculty of Subiaco Academy. During the summer sessions of 1987-88 Father David attended graduate programs at St. John University, Collegeville, Minnesota, and the Pastoral Institute at Incarnate Word College in San Antonio, Texas, respectively.

In 1989 he was assigned as pastor of Holy Redeemer Church in Clarksville and its mission of Sacred Heart Church in Hartman, Arkansas. He was sent to Texas in 1994 as pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Muenster which, at that time, was the largest parish staffed by the Benedictines of Subiaco Abbey.

Father David was the last Benedictine pastor of this Texas parish to be appointed by Abbot Jerome Kodell. In 1997, after 104 years of faithful Benedictine ministry, the monks of Subiaco Abbey relinquished their pastoral care of Sacred Heart and the parish was returned to the Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas, under the auspices of Bishop Joseph Patrick Delaney.

Father David returned to Subiaco Abbey where he was appointed Prior of the monastery by Abbot Jerome Kodell on July 15, 1997, a position he held until August of 2012, when he was appointed pastor of St. Mary Church in Altus, Arkansas, where he was pastor until the time of his death.



Serving the community as prior for some 15 years, Father David also gave wholehearted assistance to the Abbey's Black Angus cattle farm. In this competitive industry, he kept abreast of technical data on each animal in the herd.

Father David's favorite pastime was to read a good book or listen to Italian opera.

Father David died suddenly as the result of a brain aneurism shortly before 1 p.m. on Tuesday, December 31, 2013, at St. Mary's rectory in Altus, Arkansas.

At the time of his death, Father David was 74 years old. He had been a professed monk for 52 years and a priest for 27 years. He is buried in our cemetery.