

## Brother Fridolin Vetter

August 6th is the anniversary of the death of Brother Fridolin Vetter. Joseph Vetter was born on June 24, 1889, in the village of Aasen, Germany. Joseph's parents were farmers, and he had one brother and five sisters, one of whom was a Franciscan Sister in Nevada, Missouri.

When Joseph was old enough to begin his elementary education, the family had moved to Württemberg where he attended the local school for seven years. For the next 10 years he worked on the family farm.

By 1913, Joseph was making plans to join a fellow-countryman headed for another abbey in the United States; however, he missed the sailing date and was left behind. At this time, Joseph met Abbot Ignatius Conrad, the first abbot of Subiaco, who was in Europe seeking vocations for Subiaco. Joseph's interest was aroused, and plans were quickly made for his coming to Subiaco.

On October 27, 1913, Joseph Vetter arrived in the United States in the company of Abbot Ignatius. On June 24, 1915--his 26th birthday--Joseph Vetter professed his vows as a monk of our monastery, receiving the name Fridolin.

With his farming experience in Germany, Brother Fridolin served our community on the abbey farm first as the butcher, then caretaker of the hogs and horses, followed by caretaker of the vineyard.

In 1946, Brother Fridolin was sent to Texas where for the next 13 years he cared for the livestock and grounds at Corpus Christi Academy. Taking advantage of his stay at Corpus Christi, he learned to read Spanish, thus developing a hobby of reading Spanish literature.

By 1959, a heart condition continued to worsen, and Brother Fridolin returned to Subiaco for retirement. However, after so many years of active work, he found retirement stressful. He offered his services in the kitchen cleaning and preparing fruits and vegetables for the cooks. It was at his work in the abbey kitchen that he suffered a stroke on Friday, August 6, 1965.

After receiving emergency medical attention and the Last Rites, Brother Fridolin was taken to Crawford County Memorial Hospital in Van Buren, Arkansas, where he died of a heart attack later in the day. Less than six weeks before his death, Brother Fridolin marked his double anniversary of birthday and profession.

At the time of his death, Brother Fridolin was 76 years old and in the 50th year of his monastic profession. He is buried in our cemetery.

