

## Brother Leo Laesche

January 6th is the anniversary of the death of Brother Leo Laesche. Harry Laesche was born in St. Louis, Missouri, on June 27, 1902, and was christened Henry August Laesche. He came to Subiaco as a teenager and made his oblation at Subiaco in 1919 as a claustral oblate. For 12 years Brother Leo served our community as a claustral oblate. On January 21, 1931, he professed his vows as a monk of our monastery.

Brother Leo served our community for many years in the laundry and the monastic refectory. Students used to marvel at Brother Leo's ability to recall in an instant the laundry number of every student and monk in the community.

Late in 1956 Brother Leo was experiencing stomach pains. He was taken to St. Anthony's Hospital in Morrilton where the doctor diagnosed that he had a large gall stone in the gall bladder. Surgery was performed on December 29 for the removal of the gall bladder, and for the next few days Brother Leo seemed to be making a normal recovery following the operation.

But on January 5 his condition worsened. His sister from Missouri came and she and Father Paul Hoedebeck, abbey infirmarian, were present when Brother Leo died at St. Anthony's Hospital on Sunday night, January 6, 1957.

On Tuesday, January 8, Father Placidus Eckart, director of the brothers, was celebrant of the funeral Mass with Father Prior Maurus Gerke conducting the graveside rites.

At the time of his death, Brother Leo was 54 years old, having lived 12 years as a claustral oblate in our monastery and then 25 years as a professed member of the community. Brother Leo had just marked his silver jubilee of profession the previous year. He is buried in our cemetery.

