

## Father Aloysius Baumgaertner

October 16th is the anniversary of the death of Father Aloysius Baumgaertner. Joseph Baumgaertner was born on September 22, 1868, in the town of Ravensburg, Germany. He came to the United States and to our monastery with the "Expedition" of 1889 from the abbey of Einsiedeln led by Father Pius Zwyszig, arriving in New York on October 1.

In this "Expedition" which arrived at Subiaco on October 6, there were two priests and six students of whom four were candidates for the priesthood and two were candidates for the brotherhood. Of the candidates, four persevered, one being Joseph Baumgaertner, who professed his vows as a monk of our monastery on October 15, 1890, receiving the name Aloysius.

He was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Edward M. Fitzgerald at St. Andrew's Cathedral in Little Rock on May 6, 1894. Father Aloys served our community for four decades in the parish missions.

Immediately following ordination, Father Aloys was assigned as assistant pastor of St. Edward's Church in Little Rock from 1894 to 1895. Later he was assigned to parishes in Van Buren, Hartman, and Clarksville, Arkansas.

While he was pastor of Holy Redeemer Church in Clarksville, three men robbed the local bank in 1902, killing the sheriff in the fracas. The three were convicted and sentenced to be executed. The three inmates welcomed the Christian compassion shown them by Father Aloys during their imprisonment, and all three of them converted to Catholicism before their execution.

Leaving Clarksville in 1905 to become pastor of St. Peter's Church in Lindsay, Texas, Father Aloys first took a three month trip to Europe to visit his relatives in his German homeland.

Father Aloys spent the next five years as pastor in Lindsay, Texas, until his appointment as pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Muenster, Texas, in September, 1910. However, by April, 1911, his frail health forced him to resign as pastor.

Father Aloys was assigned to a smaller parish; namely, St. Joseph's Church in Paris, Arkansas, where he served as the second resident pastor from 1911 to 1918. A quiet man of rather delicate appearance, Father Aloys was, however, a capable carpenter and mechanic. During his pastorate the first brick school building was constructed in the parish.

From 1918 to 1928 Father Aloys was pastor of St. Scholastica's Church in Shoal Creek, Arkansas.

Father Aloys suffered a stroke following several years of poor health. He died in the abbey infirmary on Tuesday evening, October 16, 1934.

At the time of his death, Father Aloysius was 66 years old and in the 44th year of his monastic profession, the 40th of his priesthood. He is buried in our cemetery.

