

Father Cletus Post

November 17th is the anniversary of the death of Father Cletus Post. John Post was born in Fort Smith, Arkansas, on June 5, 1913. He grew up in Altus, Arkansas, where he and his four brothers and eight sisters were raised by their stepmother.

Following his elementary education at St. Mary's School in Altus, he came to Subiaco for his secondary education, graduating from our academy with the class of 1932.

John Post professed his vows as a monk of our monastery on September 16, 1934, receiving the name Cletus. He joined his uncle, Father Peter Post, here in religious life. He was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop John B. Morris at St. Andrew's Cathedral in Little Rock on June 3, 1939, one of seven monks, the largest group ever ordained for our abbey at one time.

From 1939 until 1950, Father Cletus served our community in several roles as a teacher, assistant prefect, and athletic director in our academy. Later, he was also appointed director of development, raising funds for the restoration and rebuilding of the abbey, which was still in debt from the disastrous fire of 1927 and the national depression of 1929. He also served as circulation director for *The Abbey Message*.

From 1950 until 1955, he served in Texas as assistant pastor at Sacred Heart Church in Muenster, and then as a teacher at Laneri High School in Fort Worth. In 1955, Father Cletus was appointed pastor of St. Joseph's Church in Paris, Arkansas, and in 1962 he returned to Texas as pastor of St. Mary's Church in Windthorst where he spent his longest pastorate--16 years. While there, he celebrated his silver sacerdotal jubilee in 1964.

When he was pastor in Paris, Arkansas, Father Cletus had a new rectory built in the parish. When he became pastor in Windthorst, Texas, he had an almost identical rectory built in this parish as the one located in Paris. Also, he was instrumental in building a new elementary school and constructing the first parish hall in Windthorst.

His last parochial assignment came in 1978 when he was appointed pastor of St. Peter's Church in Lindsay, Texas. During his 10-year pastorate, Father Cletus had the interior of the parish church renovated, with the restoration of the original art which covers its ceilings and walls. Today, this church bears a Texas Historical Building Medallion signifying it as having been named a Recorded Texas Historical Landmark, and significant to the history of the community and the state, and worthy of preservation.

Always a joyful person, Father Cletus was an inspiration to his brother-monks and his parishioners. In July, 1980, he led a pilgrimage to Europe and the Holy Land.

Father Cletus marked his golden jubilee of profession in 1984, but due to failing health, he did not attend the community celebration honoring the jubilarians here at the abbey.

In October of 1988, Father Cletus was diagnosed as having several inoperable brain tumors. He was admitted to Scott and White Hospital in Temple, Texas, on October 12 for treatment of cancer, and for radiation. On November 2, he was released from the hospital and he returned to his parish rectory in Lindsay to convalesce.



Shortly thereafter, he was stricken with pneumonia and was admitted to Gainesville Memorial Hospital in Gainesville, Texas, on November 14. Late on the evening before his death, Father Cletus joined in the recitation of the prayers for the dying led by Abbot Raphael, with family members and monks at his bedside, after which he slept quietly away.

Father Cletus died in his sleep at 4:45 a. m. on Thursday, November 17, 1988, following his bout with cancer.

On Saturday, November 19, a Mass was held in St. Peter's Church, Lindsay, Texas, for the deceased pastor.

At the time of his death, Father Cletus was 75 years old and in the 54th year of his monastic profession, the 49th of his priesthood. He is buried in our cemetery.