

## Father Pius Zwysig

November 27th is the anniversary of the death of Father Pius Zwysig. Father Pius was born in Switzerland on October 13, 1861. He received his elementary and secondary education in his homeland. He entered the abbey of Einsiedeln where he professed his vows as a monk of this Swiss Benedictine monastery on September 8, 1882, receiving the name Pius. He was ordained to the priesthood on August 26, 1888.

Following ordination, he came to the United States and to Subiaco Priory with the "Expedition" of 1889 from the abbey of Einsiedeln, arriving in New York on October 1. He and Father Ulric Gehweiler headed the expedition, bringing six young men as candidates: four for the priesthood and two for the brotherhood. The group arrived at St. Benedict's Priory on October 6.

Father Pius served our community for three decades, spending half of his life in missionary work in Arkansas. During his years at Subiaco, Father Pius was involved in pastoral work and he taught moral theology and exegesis in our seminary.

In 1897, Father Pius returned to Switzerland to visit relatives. While in his homeland he met John Zwysig, a 30-year-old distant cousin who was interested in becoming a Benedictine monk. When Father Pius returned to Subiaco, his cousin John came with him in order to join our community. John professed his vows as a monk of our monastery and was henceforth known as Brother Andrew Zwysig.

In 1913, Father Pius celebrated his silver sacerdotal jubilee. Parochial work was especially dear to Father Pius, and he gave unstintingly of his time and compassion in the role of confessor. He was pastor of St. Benedict's Parish in Subiaco before spending one year as assistant pastor of St. Edward's Church in Little Rock, Arkansas, from 1919 to 1920.

In 1921, Father Pius left our community to return to his home monastery in Switzerland when physicians pronounced a lung trouble incurable. He continued to take an active part in the apostolic work at Einsiedeln. At the time of his death, he was in the process of translating from English into German Father Luke Hess' book *New Subiaco Abbey: a retrospect*.

Through the years his health continued to decline and on November 19, 1926, he was taken by ambulance to the Theodosianum, a sanitarium near Einsiedeln, where he died on Saturday evening, November 27, 1926.

At the time of his death, Father Pius was 65 years old and in the 44th year of his monastic profession, the 38th of his priesthood. He is buried at the Abbey of Maria Einsiedeln in Switzerland.

