

## Father Isidore Hobi

March 12th is the anniversary of the death of Father Isidore Hobi. Father Isidore was born in Europe on January 22, 1830. As a young man he entered the abbey of Einsiedeln in Switzerland where he professed his vows as a monk on May 20, 1855. Six months after his ordination on September 15, 1856, he was sent to the new foundation in Indiana. At the time of his arrival, St. Meinrad monastery was just beginning its fourth year of existence in Indiana.

The town of St. Meinrad, Indiana, was officially founded on January 28, 1861, the octave day of the thousandth anniversary of the death of its patron, St. Meinrad, and Father Isidore was instrumental in plotting the layout of the town.

A post office was established on June 21, 1862, and Father Isidore was appointed the first postmaster, an office he held until 1865. He did pastoral work on Sundays before being appointed pastor of a nearby parish. As pastor of the parish he would come to the monastery to teach.

On January 23, 1871, Father Isidore transferred his stability from Einsiedeln to St. Meinrad. Following his tenure in office as superior, Father Isidore served as rector of the minor and major seminaries.

By 1877, St. Meinrad Abbey was considering the idea of starting a foundation in Arkansas. Father Wolfgang Schlumpf was appointed to go to Arkansas to select one of two sections of land that would be shown him by the land agent of the Little Rock and Fort Smith Railroad Company; however, Father Wolfgang had just undergone foot surgery, and was unable to travel.

Father Fintan Mundwiler then directed Father Isidore to take Father Wolfgang's place. On November 28, 1877, Father Isidore left St. Meinrad to carry out the prior's directive of traveling to Arkansas to select a site for the monastery.

At St. Louis, Missouri, he joined the selection committee. Once arrived in Arkansas, the group favored a stretch of comparatively level land extending some miles into the foothills of the Quachita Mountains from the south side of the Arkansas River in Logan County. The committee gave major consideration to the Logan County tract. The location of a spring of fresh water was also important to the chosen site.

By December 20, 1877, Father Isidore had returned to St. Meinrad and summed up his account of the trip with the famous words: "It is a Paradise fallen from heaven."

In the autumn of 1879, Father Isidore was to return to Arkansas to succeed Father Wolfgang as superior of the newly founded St. Benedict's Monastery. However, plans were changed.

Instead, for the next 16 years Father Isidore remained at St. Meinrad Abbey where he was rector of the major seminary until his death on Tuesday, March 12, 1895. At the time of his death, Father Isidore was 65 years old, and in the 39th year of his monastic profession, the 38th of his priesthood. He is buried at St. Meinrad Archabbey in Indiana.

