

## Father Columban Schmucky

March 13th is the anniversary of the death of Father Columban Schmucky. Father Columban was born on May 26, 1875, in the town of Uznach, Canton Schwyz, Switzerland. As a young man, he studied in the Abbey School at Einsiedeln.

He came to the United States and to Subiaco where he professed his vows as a monk of our monastery on March 21, 1899, and was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Edward M. Fitzgerald at St. Andrew's Cathedral in Little Rock on June 24, 1904.

Father Columban served our community for many years chiefly in pastoral work. From 1906 until 1914 he was pastor at Charleston, Arkansas. He was then appointed novice master and instructor of clerics here at the abbey until 1921 when he received his last appointment; namely, as pastor in Rhineland, Texas.

After meeting the needs of his own parishioners, Father Columban gave unsparingly of his time and energy in serving the needs of the many Mexican families in and around Rhineland. He studied Spanish and tried to communicate with them as best he could. After 40 months as pastor in Rhineland, Father Columban's health began to fail.

He went to Mineral Wells, Texas, for the purpose of regaining his health, planning to return to his Rhineland parish by Palm Sunday. However, Father Columban did not live to see it. He died at Mineral Wells, Texas, on Friday, March 13, 1925, shortly after going into convulsions earlier that morning.

Abbot Ignatius and Father Columban's brother arrived shortly after his death. While Abbot Ignatius was in the office of the funeral director making arrangements for the burial of Father Columban, it was suggested to him that he buy a ten thousand dollar casket to which Abbot Ignatius replied: "That is for those who have no hope."

The funeral Mass and final obsequies for Father Columban were held at St. Joseph's Church in Rhineland, Texas, on Saturday, March 14, 1925.

At the time of his death, Father Columban was 49 years old and in the 25th year of his monastic profession, the 20th of his priesthood.

A marker honors Father Columban here in our abbey cemetery. He is buried in St. Joseph's Cemetery in Rhineland, Texas.

