

Father Alphonse Mueller

June 6th is the anniversary of the death of Father Alphonse Mueller. Pius Mueller was born in Arth, Canton Schwyz, Switzerland, on September 22, 1886. Following his elementary schooling in Arth, he attended the seminary at the abbey of Einsiedeln from 1900 to 1906.

After a brief period of military service in Switzerland, he came to the United States, arriving on July 30, 1907. He came to Subiaco on November 9, 1907, and professed his vows as a monk of our monastery on January 6, 1909, receiving the name Alphonse. He was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop John B. Morris at St. Andrew's Cathedral in Little Rock on May 30, 1913.

Father Alphonse served our community for half a century in pastoral ministry as missionary, assistant pastor, and pastor in Arkansas and Texas.

In Arkansas he served parishes in Barling, Ratcliff, Charleston, Subiaco, Shoal Creek, Scranton, Prairie View, and Little Rock. He also spent half a year as missionary of 10 counties in southeastern Arkansas as well as substituting in Tontitown. In Texas he served in Nazareth, Rhineland, and Muenster.

Father Alphonse retired from active ministry in 1960, and became chaplain at Crawford County Memorial Hospital in Van Buren, Arkansas. While serving as chaplain, he himself was suffering from a serious heart condition.

On May 30, 1965, Father Alphonse came to the abbey to begin his annual retreat, but was stricken with a heart attack that evening and had to be returned to the hospital. Another severe heart attack followed on the night of June 5, and Father Alphonse died during surgery early Sunday morning, June 6, 1965, at Crawford County Memorial Hospital in Van Buren.

On Monday evening, June 7, a Mass was offered for him in Sacred Heart Church, Charleston, where he had been pastor for 26 years.

At the time of his death, Father Alphonse was 78 years old, and in the 56th year of his monastic profession, the 52nd of his priesthood. He is buried in our cemetery.

