

Father Albert Schreiber

February 23rd is the anniversary of the death of Father Albert Schreiber. Christened William Stern, he was the son of Roumanian-born Jacob Stern and his Austrian-born wife, Gussie, who immigrated to the United States at the end of the 19th century.

William Stern was born on June 10, 1901, in New York City. He was placed in a Catholic orphanage by his destitute parents. He was adopted by Albert and Clara Schreiber of St. Mary's Parish, in Windthorst, Texas.

Following his elementary education in Windthorst, William Schreiber entered our academy and graduated with the class of 1920. He professed his vows as a monk of our monastery on September 8, 1921, receiving the name Albert, and was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop John B. Morris at St. Andrew's Cathedral in Little Rock on May 26, 1927.

Following his ordination, Father Albert pursued post-graduate studies with an English major at Texas College of Arts and Industries in Kingsville, Texas, the University of Texas, and the University of Notre Dame. He served our community for many years as a teacher at Subiaco Academy and at Corpus Christi Academy, where he was principal from 1939 to 1948. Among Father Albert's writings, two published books include Mesquite Does Bloom and When the Bishop Blesses. The first is an historical account of the first 50 years of St. Mary's Parish and community of Windthorst, Texas. The second is the story of the Benedictine Fathers in the Diocese of Corpus Christi, Texas.

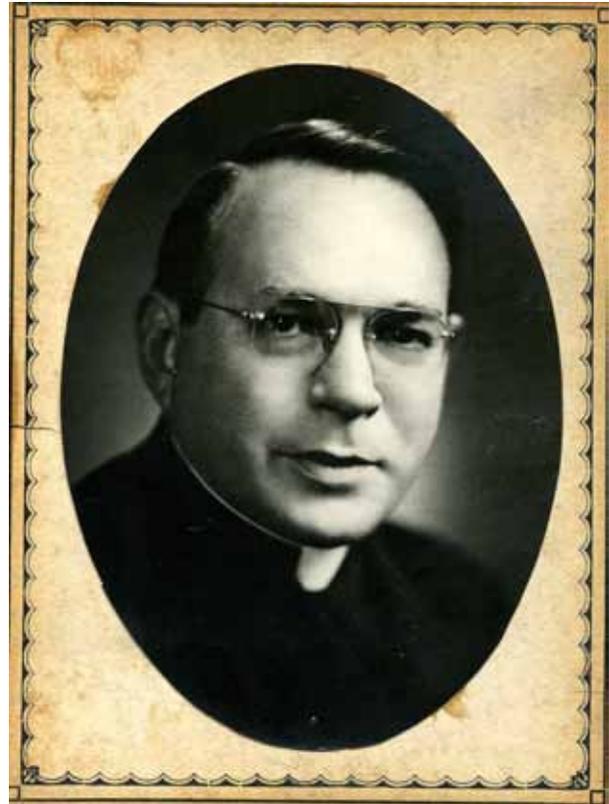
From 1948 to 1953 Father Albert was prior of our monastery. His final appointment in the field of education was as principal at Laneri High School in Fort Worth, Texas, in 1953.

After serving in this position for one year, Father Albert suffered a heart attack in his office at Laneri High School on June 17, 1954. Thus, the career of this outstanding educator and administrator was halted by a cerebral artery thrombosis which resulted in paralysis of the right side of his body; this attack left Father Albert with "aphasia," that is, the inability to read, write, or speak. Also, he had limited use of his arms and legs, and he was left with a chronic heart condition.

A special blessing from heaven was granted to Father Albert when in 1955 Doctor Palmer offered him free of charge the complete services and facilities of the Institute of Logopedics in Wichita, Kansas.

After a grueling 18 months at the Institute, Father Albert was able to say Mass for the first time since his stroke in 1954. This began a new life for Father Albert; he moved into a small house where he said Mass every day thereafter while continuing his intensive therapy at the Institute for another 18 months. Part of his therapy was continued work on his perfection of Latin so that he could read the Breviary.

After approximately three years at the Institute, Father Albert was assigned as chaplain at St. Bernard's Hospital in Jonesboro, Arkansas. He felt that he could be of some help to others and at the same time regain his strength there so that he could return to his own field of education.



But in late December of 1958, while traveling from Windthorst, Texas, to the abbey, he became suddenly ill in Fort Smith, suffering another stroke. A series of attacks followed with Father Albert remaining fully conscious throughout these weeks until he died at 5:00 a.m. on Monday, February 23, 1959, at Crawford County Memorial Hospital in Van Buren.

At the time of his death, Father Albert was 57 years old and in the 37th year of his monastic profession, the 31st of his priesthood. He is buried in our cemetery.