

Brother Aloysius Wuest

April 4th is the anniversary of the death of Brother Aloysius Wuest. John Wuest was born in Oberriet, Canton St. Gall, Switzerland, on February 6, 1871. In his youth, John worked at home with his parents and brothers on their extensive farm.

In the spring of 1891 John made a pilgrimage to the shrine at the Abbey of Maria Einsiedeln. While there he met another young man who told him of his plans to depart soon for America, where he would enter the small and struggling Benedictine community of Subiaco in Arkansas. John was captivated by this venture for God and he asked this young man to write to him, informing him how he liked the monastery in Arkansas.

Two years later, the reply came from Subiaco by Charles Weder. Immediately, John decided to join a group of young people assembling to come to the United States to join various monasteries in this country. At the age of 22, he came to the United States and to Subiaco with the "Expedition" of 1893 from the abbey of Einsiedeln.

More than 20 candidates for religious life were aboard the ship. Four of the candidates of the "Expedition" were destined for our abbey: one for the priesthood and three for the brotherhood, one being brother-candidate John Wuest.

He professed his vows as a monk of our monastery on May 24, 1895, receiving the name Aloysius.

Brother Alois, as he was known, served our community on the farm and in the construction of the new monastery building here on the hill. The latter work was considerably accelerated as the result of the loss of the old frame monastery in the fire of 1902. Later, Brother Alois served for many years as blacksmith and mail carrier. As the mail carrier he had the distinction of caring for and driving the first car the abbey possessed, an Overland.

If the flow of conversation of the monks during the communal work periods degenerated into murmuring while Brother Alois was around, he was quick to suggest that it was time to say the rosary.

He was blessed with good health all his life. Only gradual weakness set in during his golden years.

Brother Aloysius died at 3:00 a.m. on Sunday, April 4, 1948, in St. Anthony's Hospital, Morrilton, Arkansas, following an operation for a constricting hernia.

At the time of his death, Brother Aloysius was 77 years old and in the 52nd year of his monastic profession. He is buried in our cemetery.

