

Father Vincent Orth

August 8th is the anniversary of the death of Father Vincent Orth. William Orth was born in Halbur, Iowa, on May 25, 1888. When he was a young boy, his family moved from Halbur to Roselle, Iowa, and later settled in Muenster, Texas. His elementary education in Halbur and Roselle, Iowa, as well as in Muenster, was sporadic; he missed several months each year due to necessary work on the family farm.

In the autumn of 1905, when he was 17 years old, William Orth left Muenster for Subiaco where he received his secondary education in our academy from September, 1905, to June, 1907.

He entered the novitiate in September, 1907, and professed his vows as a monk of our monastery on September 9, 1909, receiving the name Vincent de Paul. He was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop John B. Morris at St. Andrew's Cathedral in Little Rock on May 30, 1913.

For over six decades Father Vincent served our community in various capacities. From 1905 to 1926, he was a printer and later manager of the abbey print shop. From 1913 to 1924, he taught elementary courses in our "prep" school as well as high school classes of Latin, English, German, and history in our academy. From 1923 to 1930, Father Vincent served as procurator. In this role of business manager of the monastery, he bore the burdens brought on by the terrible fire which virtually destroyed the entire monastic plant in 1927.

From 1930 to 1936 and again from 1941 to 1950, Father Vincent was stationed in south Texas as a faculty member of Corpus Christi Academy where his roster of teaching assignments included Latin, English, aeronautics, science, biology, algebra, geometry, trigonometry, drafting, and religion.

At Subiaco, Father Vincent was novice master from 1936 to 1941, and a teacher of philosophy, history, and Latin in the abbey seminary from 1950 until his retirement. Filled with Subiaco lore and philosophical and theological learning, Father Vincent's classes sparkled with memories and historical events brought to life in his accounts. When the monastery discontinued the major seminary program, he continued to teach the psalms and Benedictine history to the novices, and to spend the remainder of his time performing communal chores.

Father Vincent had the gifts of being a kind friend everywhere, and an indefatigable foe at the card and domino table.

In the spring of 1968, Father Vincent, the abbey's senior monk and priest, suffered a debilitating stroke which completely incapacitated him for the remainder of his life. He died in the Colony Manor (rest home) in Paris, Arkansas, on Friday, August 8, 1969.

At the time of his death, Father Vincent was 81 years old, and in 59th year of his monastic profession, the 56th of his priesthood. He is buried in our cemetery.

