

Father Meinrad Epp

April 17th is the anniversary of the death of Father Meinrad Epp. William Epp was born in Switzerland on October 5, 1865. In his youth he worked in a Swiss hotel.

As a college student at Einsiedeln, Willie Epp surprised the other collegians by joining seven other young men who were planning to embark on a missionary adventure to the United States in the State of Arkansas. Willie Epp is one of the "Eight Beatitudes" who came to the United States and to St. Benedict's Priory in 1887 with the "Great Expedition" from the abbey of Einsiedeln led by Father Gall D'Aujourd'hui.

William Epp professed his vows as a monk of our monastery on October 24, 1888, receiving the name Meinrad. He was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Edward M. Fitzgerald at St. Andrew's Cathedral in Little Rock on November 6, 1892.

After his ordination to the priesthood--from January 23, 1893, to June 1899--he was pastor and spiritual director of St. Scholastica's in Shoal Creek.

In June, 1899, Father Meinrad was appointed pastor of St. Mary's Church in Altus. After only two months, however, he was recalled to the abbey where he was appointed procurator and superintendent of the building program that was in progress at the time.

Excavations began in the fall of 1898 for the construction of a new abbey building. For the next 22 years, Father Meinrad was the overseer of all building affairs of Subiaco Abbey. He saw practically every stone of Subiaco Abbey and connected buildings of that era put in its place.

During the last several years of his life, Father Meinrad also served as subprior of the monastery.

Father Meinrad died in the abbey infirmary at 8:00 a.m. on Sunday, April 17, 1921, surrounded by Abbot Ignatius and confreres who knelt in prayer at his bedside.

At the time of his death, Father Meinrad was 55 years old and in the 32nd year of his monastic profession, the 28th of his priesthood. He is buried in our cemetery.

