

June 12

Br. Anselm Spacey

Br. Anselm Spacey was born in Prague on July 31st 1912 and died in London Ontario on June 12, 1983. He was the son of Robertus Spacek and Vojteska Korinkawa.

He received the habit in Bohemen-Moravie on August 11th 1928 and made his first vows August 12 1929 and his final vows on August 2nd 1933. He was ordained to the priesthood on June 11, 1935. From 1932-1936 he studied Theology at the Catholic University of Paris France and from 1936-1939 he studied Ecclesiastical History at the Gregorian University in Rome obtaining his Doctorate in Church History “Summa cum Laude”. He also obtained a Diploma in Medieval Sciences in Louvain, Belgium. During the 2nd World War he was an officer in three different armies, the Czechoslovakian, the French as a Lieutenant and the British Army with the rank of Major ministering to the spiritual needs of the troops. In 1946, he was appointed as special envoy of Czechoslovakia to the Holy See. From 1947-48 he was professor of History at the Capuchin Seminary in Dinard, France. Because of the Communist takeover he had to leave his country and later in 1956 when he became a Canadian citizen he changed his family name from Spacek to Spacey so that he could visit his family.

In June 26th 1948, he was given permission by the General to become a member of the Belgian Custody in Canada. From 1949 to 1956, he ministered to the Czechs and Slovaks in St. Mary’s parish in Blenheim Ontario and St. Isidore’s parish in Mull, Ontario. He also preached Missions in many parts of the U.S.A. especially in Texas. In May 1955 he became the first pastor of Holy Cross parish in Georgetown, Ontario. On July 20th he was inducted into the Belgian Province. From 1956 to 1962 he was elected Custos Provincial of the Capuchin Custody of Central Canada. Believing that there was a need to establish a province in Canada he purchased a property near Orangeville, Ontario and built Mount Alverno, a new bigger Minor Seminary in 1961. From 1962 to 1975 he was professor of Medieval History at the University of Ottawa and taught Ecclesiastical History at St. Paul University as well as the University of Ottawa. He also lectured intermittently at the Memorial University St. John’s Newfoundland. His final assignment was pastor of our Lady of Lourdes, Comber Ontario.



June 12

Br. Anselm Spacey

Br. Anselm was a devout priest, prayerful, a man of rule and well-ordered life. Although diabetic he liked a good wine and French cuisine, He had a good sense of humor and he enjoyed using superlatives in describing his favorite city of Paris. He would say that he never repeated himself when on one occasion a young friar pretended not to hear him and he repeated himself. He could hear confessions in nine languages. He possessed a truly Franciscan spirit for whom there was no problem in reconciling academic achievements with Christian devotion.

At 10 am on Sunday June 12th 1983 he died in Victoria Hospital, London, Ontario.

