



“But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish, they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be an affliction, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace... They who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love; because grace and mercy are upon his elect.” (Wisdom 3:1-3, 9)

Our heavenly Father, the Lord of the living and the dead, has called to Himself

Reverendissimus Dom. Ladislav Francis Keresztesy-Parker

Abbas - Fundator Canonice Sancti Michaelis in Orange

Sunday, 3 January, A.D. 2010, at 12:05 A.M.

Francis Pürker was born in German-speaking Vaskeresztes, Hungary on December 19, 1915. He attended school in Szombathely at the Norbertine gymnasium directed by confreres of St. Michael's Abbey in Csorna. Upon graduation Francis entered the Abbey's novitiate and received the name of Ladislav. After novitiate and profession, he completed philosophical studies in the studium of the Abbey and was then sent to Rome where he pursued theological studies at the Gregorian University. Fr. Ladislav was ordained a priest on August 20, 1940 and completed his doctoral studies in 1942 with a dissertation on "The Doctrine of St. Augustine on Hope." Upon return from his studies Fr. Ladislav was named master of novices and professor of moral theology at the Abbey, posts he filled until escaping Communist Hungary along with his confreres in July, 1950.

Received warmly by Abbot Sylvester Killeen and the confreres of St. Norbert's Abbey in DePere, Wisconsin, Fr. Ladislav and his companions served in a variety of ministerial settings doing both parish and academic work in the Abbey's widely-spread apostolates. Fr. Ladislav, though, was the driving force enabling his fellow refugees to reunite in 1957, reestablishing both the common life in Santa Ana, California and a common apostolate at Mater Dei High School, at the invitation of Cardinal James McIntyre, Archbishop of Los Angeles. He served on the faculty of Mater Dei until 1961 when in August a new foundation was opened as a junior seminary and novitiate of the Abbey of St. Michael's in Csorna.

From 1959 -1975, Fr. Ladislav was administrator of the community with its growing number of seminarians. In June 1975 the community became an independent priory and Fr. Ladislav was elected the first prelate. In August, 1984, following the decision of the Order's definitory, the canonry was elevated to abbey status and Fr. Ladislav was named its first abbot. Upon reaching 75 years of age in 1990, he was re-elected prelate. Abbot Parker became abbot emeritus upon his resignation in June, 1995. By that time and under his wise and loving governance the community had grown to 41 priests and nearly 60 confreres in all.