

BOARD COMMENTS

January 12, 2010

Adjourn in the Memory Of:

Colleagues, I would like to adjourn today's meeting in memory of Abbot Ladislas Parker.

Abbot Parker was born on December 19, 1915, in Vaskeresztes, Hungary. He attended school in Szombathely at the Norbertine gymnasium directed by confreres of St. Michael's Abbey in Csorna. Following graduation, he entered the Abbey completing novitiate and his priestly studies. After completing philosophical studies in the studium of the Abbey, he was sent to Rome where he pursued doctorate in theological studies at the Gregorian University. He was ordained as a priest on August 20, 1940, and was awarded his doctorate in 1942. Upon finishing his studies, Abbot Parker was named master of novices and professor of moral theology at the abbey; posts he filled until his escape from communist Hungary in July 1950.

In 1950, communists had repressed the Norbertines in Hungary. Many seminaries were closed, and having been warned that theirs was next, Abbot Parker and six other professors made a harrowing escape into

Austria. According to Abbot Parker, they crawled under barbed wire fences, dodged mines and communist soldiers, and swam across a river before ultimately making their way to America. Upon coming to America, Abbot Parker was warmly by Abbot Sylvester Killeen and the confreres of St. Norbert's Abbey in DePere, Wisconsin. There, Abbot Parker served in a variety of ministries performing both parish and academic work.

After receiving an invitation from Cardinal James McIntyre, Archbishop of Los Angeles, to teach at Mater Dei High School in 1957, Abbot Parker reunited his fellow refugees reestablishing both the common life in Santa Ana and a common apostolate at Mater Dei High School. Abbot Parker and the other monks saved their teaching salaries and, in 1961, founded St. Michael's Priory, along with a seminary, and St. Michael's College Prep High School for boys in Trabuco Canyon.

From 1959 -1975, Abbot Parker was administrator of the community with its growing number of seminarians. In June 1975, the community became an independent priory and elected him as prelate. In August 1984, following the decision of the Order's definitory, the canonry was elevated to abbey status and Abbot Parker was named its first abbot. In 1990, Abbot

Parker was re-elected prelate at the age of 75. In 1995, he resigned becoming abbot emeritus. By that time the community had grown to 41 priests and 60 members at other stages of formation, preparing for the priesthood.

Abbot Parker passed away on January 3rd at the age of 94. He will be missed by his colleagues at St. Michael's Abbey and by members of the community. I ask that you keep him and the Abbey in your thoughts and prayers.