



Very Rev. M. A. Waldron, O. P., S. T. M.

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BRO. ANSELM McCABE, O. P.



It is the sad duty of *Dominicana* to announce the death of Fr. Martin A. Waldron, O. P., S. T. M. In his death on December 9, 1926, the Dominicans of St. Joseph's Province in general, and in particular the Novices of the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, suffered a severe loss. To the Province Fr. Waldron's death means the loss of a devoted follower of St. Dominic, but to the Students of the House of Studies his passing means the passing of a father and a friend.

Born in Boonstown, N. J., Nov. 13, 1866, Fr. Waldron received his early education both in this place and in Wheeling, W. Va., where his family resided for some years. During these early years, we are told, he gave such indications of a religious vocation that it was little cause for surprise when in 1887 he entered the Dominican Novitiate at St. Rose Convent, Springfield, Ky. A year later on Nov. 11, 1888, he made his first religious profession.

Soon after the completion of his term of novitiate, Fr. Waldron was sent to St. Joseph's Convent, Somerset, Ohio, then the House of Studies of the Province. After but a short period in the classroom, Fr. Waldron's exceptional ability as a student manifested itself. Consequently in a short time we find Fr. Waldron on his way to the Dominican College, Louvain, to continue his philosophical and theological studies. In Belgium he was ordained priest on September 11, 1892. In 1893 he was transferred to Rome for a supplementary course in theology and canon law. Two years later, May, 1895, after a distinguished examination he received the degree of Lector in Sacred Theology.

On his return to America Fr. Waldron was assigned to teach in the House of Studies of the Province in Somerset, Ohio, for a period of ten years. Nor was this his only occupation. Besides his work in the classroom, Fr. Waldron held the posts of master of novices, master of lay-brothers, and sub-prior, while at the same time he was engaged in parochial work in the parish connected with the convent.

In 1905 when the House of Studies was transferred from Ohio to Washington, Fr. Waldron was assigned to the new studium as professor of moral theology.

In the summer of 1906 he was sent to Rome for the examination required of all candidates for the degree, Master of Sacred Theology. This he passed with singular success. At the request of the Provincial Chapter of 1909, he received his degree, an honor well merited by his many years devoted to teaching.

The last twenty years of Fr. Waldron's life were spent in Washington where he continued his work of teaching. During this time he filled many positions of trust. He held office as prior, sub-prior, regent of studies as well as master of lay-brothers. Outside of these duties in the Convent itself Fr. Waldron was also engaged in giving retreats and spiritual direction in different parts of the country.

In the spring of last year, failing health compelled him to relinquish his many duties in the hope that a complete rest would eventually permit him to resume his labors. God, however, willed otherwise. He continued to fail until, practically an invalid, deprived of the sweetness of the Sacrifice of the Mass and community exercises, which he had long enjoyed, he waited patiently, suffering all the while, the summons of the Master.

Such is the chronology of his life. Not remarkable perhaps to the world from which he remained hidden, but truly heroic in the eyes of those who were privileged to live with him. Fr. Waldron's greatness was not of the world but of the spirit. He was remarkable, not only because of his many extraordinary accomplishments, but also because he did the ordinary things expected of every true Dominican extraordinarily well.

Someone has defined the Dominican spirit as "the intellectual ideal reached by the double path of knowledge and asceticism." Measured by this standard Fr. Waldron was a worthy son of St. Dominic. For those who have known him during his many years as a Dominican assure us that his one endeavor has been to acquire the Dominican heritage of knowledge and sanctity.

From his entrance into the Order until stricken by his last illness Fr. Waldron was a student. He did not permit the knowledge of his subject gathered from years of experience to tempt him from his daily preparation for the classroom. He was ever a student and even to his last days gave an example of study worthy of imitation. His knowledge of theology was exceptional. The many favors bestowed on him by the Order in recognition of his many successful years devoted to the cause of Dominican education are ample proof of his intellectual ability.

Although his influence on the intellectual formation of those who studied under him was great, he wielded still greater influence by the sanctity of his life. He was always present at the exercises of the community, the recitation of the Divine Office, meditation, rosary, as well as all the other choral obligations. In choir he gave an edifying example of recollection unaffected and sincere. His whole appearance likened him to the saints of old, who, ever conscious of the Divine Presence, spoke only to God or of Him.

His devotion to the Eucharist was lifelong. As a youth his chief desire was to serve at the altar. As a priest offering up the Holy Sacrifice his devotion was angelic. Many hours he spent in meditation and adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. In the early morning, after his own duties were satisfied, he would go from chapel to chapel to be present at Mass. It was an inspiring sight of devotion and humility to see him kneeling at the altar to serve Mass, a thing which he did, even in recent years, whenever the opportunity presented itself. Such was his whole life, study and prayer. Yet he neglected no chance to do good for his charity knew no bounds.

On resigning his duties at the House of Studies, Fr. Waldron sought elsewhere for the medical attention which he hoped would enable him to resume his work among us. When relief was not forthcoming, realizing perhaps that the end was near, he returned to spend his last days among his former pupils. For a time an improvement set in, but stricken with pneumonia he failed rapidly. On December 9, 1926, fortified by the sacraments of the Church he fell asleep in the Lord.

He, who influenced us by the sanctity of his life and good example, will not soon be forgotten. With the brethren of old, who cried out at the death of St. Thomas, we can say from our hearts, "*Doctor noster a nobis tollitur, Pater noster a nobis sumitur.*"

