

✠ FATHER HILARY REGIS AHERN, O.P. ✠

On December 13, 1954 death came suddenly to Father Hilary R. Ahern as the result of a heart attack. Several Dominican priests who were present administered sacramental absolution and shortly afterward he received Extreme Unction from another Dominican. Almost immediately his other Brethren in Providence gathered in the Fathers' Chapel at the College to recite the Dominican liturgical prayers. Amidst supplications to Our Blessed Mother, Father Ahern departed from this world.

Hilary Ahern, the son of Fred J. and Lucy McDonough Ahern, came into the world in New York City on October 23, 1910. His mother died shortly after giving birth to him. Hilary attended St. Ignatius Loyola Parochial School in New York City, Aquinas College High School in Columbus, Ohio, and Providence College, Rhode Island. He entered the Dominican Novitiate at St. Rose Priory, Springfield, Kentucky, where, on August 15, 1930 he received the habit of the Order from the hands of the Very Reverend J. P. Aldridge, O.P. The next year on August 16th Brother Regis Ahern made simple profession of vows before the same Father Aldridge. His years of philosophical training were spent at the Dominican House of Studies in River Forest, Illinois. Following this was a year of theology at St. Joseph's Priory, Somerset, Ohio from 1934-35, and three years of studying the same sacred science in the Dominican House of Studies at Washington, D.C. Brother Regis was ordained a priest on June 11, 1937 by Archbishop Michael J. Curley in St. Dominic's Church, Washington, D. C.

While at River Forest Father Ahern obtained his A.B. degree, and received a Lectorate in Sacred Theology in the House of Studies, Washington, D. C. In 1938 he went to teach in the Collegio de San Juan de Letran, Manila, Philippine Islands. 1940 saw him a professor at the University of Santo Tomas in the same city. While in Manila Father Ahern was a successful candidate for two degrees, becoming a Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy.

After a short leave of absence in 1941, he returned to Santo Tomas and was soon confined there and at Los Banos by the Japanese invaders, an imprisonment which lasted until 1945. In both places Father Ahern showed a true Dominican spirit. Through instructions and Baptism he won many souls for Christ and even at the risk of his own life he carried on his ministry. Only humility prevented his re-

ceiving from the United States Government the public recognition merited for his heroic patriotism.

Upon his return to America Father Ahern was in a frail condition. But it was not long before he happily accepted a teaching assignment at Our Lady of Cincinnati College. Following seven years of dutiful service in Cincinnati, he came in 1952 to the faculty of Providence College where he taught philosophy and theology. At the time of his death he held the office of Chairman in the Department of Theology.

At 10:00 A.M., December 16, 1954, in St. Pius Church, Providence, a Solemn Pontifical Mass was offered for Father Ahern by the Most Rev. Russell J. McVinney, D.D., Bishop of Providence. His deacons of honor were Very Rev. F. J. Baeszler, O.P., and Very Rev. J. D. Walsh, O.P. The President of Providence College, Very Rev. Robert J. Slavin, O.P., was Archpriest, with Rev. John D. McMahon, O.P., acting as deacon and Rev. J. S. McCormack, O.P., as subdeacon. The eulogy was preached by Rev. J. J. Molloy, O.P. The other ministers at the funeral Mass were: acolytes, Rev. V. F. McHenry, O.P., and Rev. R. D. Danilowicz, O.P.; thurifer, Rev. L. E. Schnell, O.P., book bearer, Rev. J. D. Skalko, O.P.; mitre bearer, Rev. E. A. Hogan, O.P., and gremial bearer, Rev. E. H. Putz, O.P. Present at the funeral were Rt. Rev. Justin Najny, D.D., pastor of St. Basil's Church, Central Falls, R. I., several priors and other representatives from the Dominican Houses in the East. The burial took place at the Providence College Cemetery, Providence, R. I.

To Father Ahern's family and friends *Dominicana* offers sincere and heartfelt expression of sympathy. *May his soul rest in peace!*